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A

HISTORY

OF THE

ENGLISH BAPTISTS:

COMPRISING

THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS

OF THE

History of Protestant Dissenters,

FROM THE

REVOLUTION IN 1668 TILL 1760;

AND OF THE

LONDON BAPTIST CHURCHES,

DURING THAT PERIOD.

BY JOSEPH IVIMEY.

VOL. III.

London:
PRINTED FOR B. J. HOLDSWORTH,
18, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.
1823.

OXFORD :
PRINTED BY BARTLETT AND HINTON.

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PREFACE.

STRADA, describing the qualifications of an historian, says, "To execute the office well, the writer should belong to no country, no order of men, no party, and no religion." The Writer of this History makes no pretensions to such qualifications. He is an *Englishman*, who venerates the excellent and liberal constitution settled at the period of the glorious Revolution in 1688; he is a *Protestant*, who admires the principles of the Reformation; he is a *Dissenter*, who claims the right of private judgment in matters of religion, and who rejoices that this right is recognized and confirmed by the Act of Toleration; he is a *Baptist*, who rejects Pædobaptism, because he considers it an unscriptural innovation; and he is a *Calvinist*, who glories in the doctrines of free grace as exhibited in the gospel, because no one owes more to sovereign grace, or expects more from it, than himself.

It has afforded him real gratification in collecting the loyal and constitutional addresses which have been presented to the throne by the General Body of Dissenting ministers in London, to find that the Baptists have always been most prompt and zealous in giving proof of their solicitude for the Protestant Succession, their attachment to the princes of the House of Hanover, and their veneration for the principles of English law, which guarantee equal civil rights, and the inalienable privilege of religious liberty.

The most remarkable period of that part of the history now brought under review, in relation to Protestant Dis-

senters, is the latter part of Queen Anne's reign, when God wrought a great deliverance for them. Since that part of the volume was printed off, the Author has met with a paper in relation to the conduct of the Dissenters, which was written in London in the year 1712, and extensively dispersed throughout Great Britain and Ireland. As he has not seen it noticed in any history of Dissenters, and as it is too valuable to be lost or unknown, he has introduced it into the Preface. It is entitled, "A serious Call from the City to the Country, to join with them in setting apart some Time, viz. from Seven to Eight, every Tuesday Morning, for solemn Seeking of God, each one in his Closet, now in this so critical a Juncture; Jonah i. 6.—*Call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.*" The following is an extract:—

"You have formerly been called upon to the like duty, and have complied with it; and that not without success. It is now thought highly seasonable to renew the call. It is hoped that you will not be more backward, when it is so apparent that there is even greater need. It is scarce imaginable how a professing people should stand in greater need of prayer, than we do this day. You were formerly addressed from that very pertinent text, Zech. viii. 21,—*The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily, and pray before the Lord,* (or as the marginal reading, more expressive of the original reading, is,) *continually, from day to day, to seek the face of the Lord.* According to this excellent pattern, we of this city, the metropolis of our land, think ourselves obliged to call upon our brethren in Great Britain and Ireland, at a time when our hearts cannot but meditate terror, and our flesh tremble for fear of God, and are afraid of his righteous judgments. Those past being for the most part forgotten, and the signs of the times foreboding evil to come, being by the generality little, if at all, regarded, we cannot but renew our earnest request, that all who make conscience of praying for the peace of Jerusalem—who wish well to Zion—who would

have us and our posterity a nation of British Protestants, and not of popish bigots and French slaves—would give us, (as far as real, and not pretended necessity will give leave,) a meeting at the throne of grace, at the hour mentioned; there to wrestle with God, for the turning away his anger from us; for deliverance from the hands of his and our enemies; for the turning the councils of all Ahithophels, at home and abroad, into foolishness; for mercy to the Queen and kingdom; for a happy peace or successful war, as long as the matter shall continue undetermined; for securing the protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover, (by good and evil wishes to which, the friends and enemies of our civil and religious rights are so essentially distinguished;) and especially for the influences of divine grace upon the rising generation, particularly the seed of the righteous, that the offspring of our Christian heroes may never be the plague and curse of our country. And we desire that this solemn prayer be begun the first Tuesday after sight, and continued at least the summer of this present year, 1712. And we think that a modest, reasonable, and just request, such as this, should not on any account be denied us; since we are not laying a burden on others, to which we will not most willingly put our own shoulders; nay, indeed, count it much more a blessing than a burden. We hope this will not be esteemed, by serious Protestants of any denomination, a needless step; much less do we fear being censured by any such, as fanciful and melancholy, on account of such a proposal. We, with them, believe in a Providence, and know and acknowledge that our God is a God hearing prayer. Scripture recordeth, and our age is not barren of, instances of God's working marvellous deliverances for his people, in answer to humble, believing, and importunate prayer; especially when prayer and reformation go together, which is what we desire. Let this counsel be acceptable to us in this day of the church's calamity, and our common fears. Let us *seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.* Let us humble ourselves under

the mighty hand of God. Let us go and pray unto our God, and he will hearken unto us. We shall seek him and find him, when we shall search for him with all our hearts. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love her. And may Zion's friends and enemies both cry out with wonder, when they see the work of God, "Behold, they pray!—*What hath God wrought? Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*"

"P.S. It is desired and hoped, that if any are hindered from attending this work at the above-mentioned hour, they will nevertheless set apart a hour weekly for it."*

Such was the spirit which animated the general body of Dissenters in London, when such men as a Williams and a Tong took the lead among the Presbyterians, a Watts and a Bradbury among the Independents, and a Stennett and a Piggott among the Baptists. The history will shew how God mercifully and wonderfully heard their extraordinary and united prayers, and by an event as singular as unexpected, *pulled*, as it were, *his hand, even his right hand, out of his bosom*, and preserved the Protestant Interest in Great Britain and Ireland, and in all probability in Europe, from overwhelming devastation and ruin.

The Writer is delighted to have been able to prove that the Baptists, as a denomination, have steadily opposed the profane practice of occasional communion with the established church, for obtaining offices in the state, by the principles which they have propagated upon that subject, and by condemning the conduct of those who have fallen into that disgraceful and wicked practice.

Nor has it been less pleasing to exhibit facts of their readiness to promote benevolent institutions, both in their own

* I am not acquainted whether this Address was published or not at the time, or whether it was even printed. I have copied it from a little work by Dr. Jonathan Edwards, of America, in 1747, entitled, "An Humble Attempt to promote Explicit Agreement, and Visible Union," &c. p. 159, 160.

churches, and in connection with their brethren of other denominations. Of the former, the Baptist Fund for the relief of poor ministers, and for the education of students for the ministry, is sufficient evidence; and of the latter the establishment of the "Widow's Fund," and "The Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor," afford full proof. The Writer hopes he may have furnished matter that will prevent, in future, the slander that has been commonly heaped upon the Baptists, as "the most sectarian of sects, the most entrenched and fortified in the narrow circle of its communion;" an assertion this, not only destitute of evidence, but in opposition to the whole tenour of their history. The following quotation from a popular Dissenting publication affords proof of the narrow sectarian feelings of the anonymous writer towards the Baptists:—

"Nor is it a little remarkable that the first demonstration of an awakened zeal should have been made by that which has been esteemed, and not without reason, the most sectarian of sects, the most entrenched and fortified in the narrow circle of its communion,—the Baptists. To them, next to the Moravians, is due the merit of having, as a body, broken new ground, and set the example to the Christian world, of invading the inmost territories of the prince of darkness."*

It is a fact which cannot be disproved, and which ought to be universally known, that the Baptists first understood the principles of unrestricted religious liberty—that they were the first to propagate them—and that they have never violated them by abridging others of the liberty which they claimed for themselves.† It is singular, too, that this should

* Eclectic Review for August, 1822, p. 123.

† For proof of this the Writer refers to vol. i. p. 124, of this History. The works of Mr. Roger Williams, in reply to the Rev. Mr. Cotton, of Boston; and, above all, the charter he obtained for the state of Rhode Island, present irrefragable evidence, that as he had learned the sentiment from the English Baptists, so he was the first who effectually and practically taught it to the world.

be admitted by a Roman Catholic writer, whilst it is always kept out of sight by Dissenting Pædobaptists! Mr. Charles Butler, in his "Historical Memoirs of the English Catholics," says, "It is observable, that this denomination of Christians, [the Baptists,] now truly respectable, but in their origin as little intellectual as any, *first propagated the principles of religious liberty*." Vol. i. p. 325.

Notwithstanding the notoriety of this fact, even the Rev. Mr. Brookes, author of a work on religious liberty, has asserted, but without a shadow of evidence, that the Independents first propagated these principles. It is well known that the great Dr. John Owen did not understand the subject, even *theoretically*, and that the Independents of America of that period denied it *practically*.

That the Baptist churches in general have restricted membership and communion at the Lord's table to those who have been baptized by immersion, on a personal profession of faith, is undoubtedly true; and if they have acted in this way without reasons drawn from the sole authority of Christ in his church, they cannot be shielded from the charge of sectarianism. But even in this, the most obnoxious of their principles, wherein do they differ from the conduct of all established, as well as of all congregational churches? Do not they also maintain, that baptism is an indispensable pre-requisite to communion at the Lord's table? If this then be sectarian, they are not more sectarian than other sects, though they have probably acted more consistently with their avowed opinions. But let the Baptists be tried upon this charge without prejudice being retained against them; let truth and candour be heard on their side, and impartiality pronounce the verdict. When did they object to unite with other Christians in any plan of humanity and benevolence, whether for the education of the poor, or the circulation of the Scriptures, or any thing in religion which did not exact from them the sacrifice of principles conscientiously held, and, as they think, scripturally proved? Had the Reviewer considered this, all his

surprise at their "awakened zeal" would have been prevented, nor would his "hard speeches" have been even uttered.

If proof be demanded for these assertions, let the querist consult the names of the first and the most active members of the "Sunday-school Society," the "Religious Tract Society," the "British and Foreign Bible Society," the "British and Foreign School Society," the Societies for the Conversion of Sailors, &c. and he will find that the Baptists have not been "a whit behind the chief" of those who have set the fairest examples of enlightened zeal, Christian candour, and philanthropic benevolence. If an appeal to incontrovertible facts be final, there can be no doubt that the decision on this question may be considered as for ever settled.

It has been a painful employment to narrate the history of some churches once numerous and prosperous, till the "candlestick was removed out of its place;" till "Ichabod, the glory is departed," was written upon the doors, and this, because the ark of God had been removed. In most instances, the extinction of these societies arose from their ministers having departed from the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, the proper divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit, &c.; and in others, it appears to have proceeded from the non-application of the invitations of the gospel to unconverted hearers of the gospel; and in many cases, to the non-observance of strict scriptural discipline.

In describing the sentiments opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, &c. he has employed the term Socinian, not for the mean purpose of reproach, but because, at the period to which this work refers, the modern term Unitarian had not been claimed by Socinians, as that which distinguished them from other Christians. The folly, to say nothing of the arrogance, of this assumption, will appear to all who admit that Trinitarians are also Unitarians; for though they believe there are three divine and equal per-

sons in the Deity, they believe in, and worship, not three Gods, but one God only.

The Writer has made some strong and pointed extracts from the works of Baptist authors in defence of their distinguishing tenets, and he is not aware that he ought to offer any apology for this, as he fully accords in the general sentiment expressed by them,—that infant baptism can plead no higher authority than other religious ceremonies which are acknowledged to be of mere human invention.

The reader will find also, that he has expressed himself strongly respecting what he considers the false Calvinism which obtained very generally in the London Baptist churches during the period of which he has written, and of the departure of some from the spirit and principles of the "Confession of Faith,"* which are equally removed from the Arminian and the Antinomian creeds; securing all the glory of salvation to the riches of distinguishing grace, and teaching those who have believed in God to be careful to maintain good works. Although he venerates the piety of the eminent men by whom this error was introduced and propagated, he has felt it his duty to expose the baneful tendency of their principles. He is happy to think, on this subject, with those useful and distinguished ministers, the

* The confession of faith, often referred to in this work, was first printed in 1677. To it were prefixed an Address to the Reader, and an Appendix, both of which are printed in vol. i. p. 420—429. It was adopted by the General Assembly in 1689, and signed by thirty-seven pastors, "in the name and behalf of the whole Assembly." The General Assembly which met in London from June the 6th to the 12th, 1693, resolved, "That the confession of faith of all the baptized churches, of the last impression, be translated into Latin with all convenient speed." There is no proof that this resolution was ever carried into effect.

This Confession consists of forty-two articles, and is most earnestly recommended as containing a "form of sound words." Quoting the language of the ministers who originally signed it, the Writer adds, "Which Confession we own, as containing the doctrines of our faith and practice; and do desire that the members of our churches respectively do furnish themselves therewith."—It may be had at Offor's, 44, Newgate-street, price 1*s*.

Stennetts and the Wallins,* a Keach, a Piggott, and a Gifford; and he feels persuaded, had their manner of preaching been universal, the churches would not have suffered the decline which evidently appears to have taken place in numbers and in zeal, towards the close of the reign of George II.

To render the work profitable for spiritual edification, large extracts have been made from the biographical sketches given of eminent Christians, both men and women, in their printed funeral sermons. It was considered that these examples of a *conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ*, would operate as a powerful stimulus to the reader to imitate their *work of faith*, their *patience of hope*, and their *labour of love*. For the purpose, too, of showing the spirit and talents of those who once had the rule over our churches in London, extracts have been made from their works, many of which are now become very scarce, with a view at once to exhibit the end of their conversation, and to hold them up as examples of theological accuracy, and evangelical ardour in the cause of their divine Master. It is hoped that the principles and zeal of a Keach, of a Piggott, and of others of a similar character, will live again in the ministers of all our churches.

In compiling this Volume, the Author has made great use of the "History and Antiquities of the Dissenting Churches in London," by Walter Wilson, Esq. a gentleman who, by his indefatigable labours in collecting, by his skill in arranging such multifarious materials, and by the candour which he has generally manifested, has rendered an invaluable service to the whole body of Dissenters,—a service which they have now lost the opportunity of properly acknowledging, as they have left the disinterested author to suffer a large pecuniary loss through the want of pur-

* When the Work was nearly finished, the writer discovered, in Bachus's History of America, some excellent letters of the Rev. Edward Wallin, and of Thomas Hollis, Esq. written to ministers in America during the years 1726—1730. These must appear in the next Volume.

chasers of his excellent work. The fourth volume of Crosby's History has supplied many of the materials.*

The Author acknowledges, with sentiments of great respect, the kindness of the Managers of the Baptist Fund, and of the Widows' Fund, in permitting him to use their records; while he expresses his ardent wish, that what he has published respecting those beneficial societies, may tend to procure for them a still larger share of the public countenance and support. The Minutes of the Society of London Calvinistic Ministers have rendered him considerable assistance, and will be further useful in reference to the history of the country churches. The minutes preserved at the Red Cross-street Library, of the proceedings of the General Body of the Three Denominations, were open to his use; though, he regrets to say, he was refused access to the manuscripts, which he had always considered as being *held in trust* only, for the use of the whole body of Protestant Dissenters. He acknowledges also his obligations to those Ministers, and others of the Denomination, who have rendered him assistance, by lending him church records, or scarce books:—to the Rev. Timothy Thomas, and the Rev. Dr. Evans, of Islington; the Rev. Thomas Hutchins, pastor of the church in Unicorn-yard; the Rev. Thomas Edmonds, of Leominster; and to Messrs. Thomas George, of Greek-street; William Paxon, of Grey's Inn Lane; Benjamin Coxhead, of Tooley-street; Job Heath, of the Borough; Edwards, of Lyme; and Booth, of Coventry.

The Writer has not considered it necessary always to quote his authorities for minute circumstances, though he has generally done so. He trusts it will be sufficient to say, that when he has had an opportunity, he has consult-

* After the appearance of the First Volume of Crosby's Work, the Rev. John Lewis, of Margate, published his "History of the Anabaptists," &c. making some unjust reflections upon the Author. Mr. Crosby replied to this in a suitable spirit, and with great ability. This work, which is creditable to the Author, is very scarce.

ed the authorities to which other writers have referred; and for what he has selected from manuscripts, he has no doubt of the confidence of the public in believing that he has quoted them fairly, without keeping back any thing essential to the history of any church or individual, and without having tortured any thing, to make it serve any particular purpose, or to speak a sectarian language.

It would be false modesty did he not thus own, that he has felt encouraged by the testimonies of affectionate approbation which the former Volumes have obtained from those whose good opinion is worth possessing. He has spared neither time nor expense, in attempting to make the present Volume worthy the acceptance of the Denomination whose history it records, and to whose use it is dedicated: and though they will find but few things which the men of the world would consider honourable and distinguishing, they will meet with nothing of which a Christian need be ashamed; but, on the contrary, much to fill them with honest self-gratulation, that they are descended from those who steadily made the word of God their rule, and the glory of God the end of their actions.

The Writer intended to include in this Volume, sketches of the history of the Baptist churches in the different counties of England, and he feels much obliged by the communications sent him, by many of his brethren, for that purpose. The proposed limits of the Volume, however, would not admit of this; nor even of all he had written of the London churches; as he has been compelled to defer a full and impartial account of the church in Paul's-alley, and sketches of the churches in Pennington-street, Virginia-street, Ratcliffe Highway; Paul's, Shadwell; Glass-house-street and Grafton-street; Deptford; Sabbatarian, Mill-yard; Petticoat-lane; Embroiderers'-hall and Brown's-hall; Jewin-street and Red Cross-street; and of the Churches of the Six Principles, to the next volume.

Several pages more than proposed have been added to make the present Volume as complete as possible, and

he has even now been obliged to leave out of the history of the church in Little Wild-street, the biographies of Mr. John Taylor, Mr. Samuel Burch, and Allen Evans, Esq.

It is his intention to publish two more Volumes. The Fourth will be compiled of materials which relate to the remainder of the London churches, and of the country churches, during the period of the present Volume. The history of the Western Association, from its commencement, in 1653, and of the Bristol Education Society, will form some of its most prominent features. The Fifth Volume to comprise all the leading events of the denomination, both in London and the country, from 1760 till 1820. The history of the first twenty-eight years of the Baptist Missionary Society, with the histories of the academies at Bristol, Stepney, and Bradford, and of the Baptist Irish Society, and the Baptist Home Missionary Society, will be introduced and fully narrated. The intimate connection of the Author with the committees of several of these institutions, will enable him to execute this part of his Work, in a great measure, from personal knowledge.

He could not satisfy himself in concluding this preface, without mentioning the very essential aid he has derived, and by which his labours have been greatly relieved, from the literary help afforded him by his friend Mr. John Satchell, of Islington, whose kindness is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

That these records of ministers and private Christians, may become a means of propagating the spirit and principles of pure and undefiled religion, and of unsophisticated and primitive Christianity; and that this attempt to promote the glory of the Saviour by the weakest of his public servants, may be graciously accepted, and rendered subservient to the furtherance of his cause, *to whom be glory for ever and ever*, is the humble and sincere prayer of the unworthy Author,

JOSEPH IVIMEY.

Harpur-street, Dec. 10, 1822.

CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

	Page
CHAP. I.—Reign of King William III. 1688—1702.	17— 37
II.—Reign of Queen Anne, 1702—1714. -	38—110
III.—Reign of George I. 1714—1727. - -	110—189
IV.—Reign of George II. 1727—1760. - -	189—292

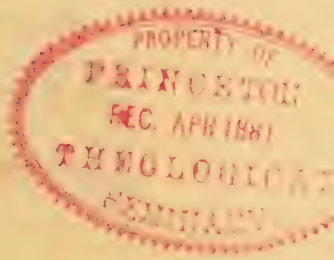
BOOK II.

HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN LONDON.

Broad-street, Old Gravel-lane, Wapping - -	293—311
Devonshire-square - - - - - -	311—330
Petty France - - - - - - -	330—340
Lorimers'-hall - - - - - -	340—348
Turners'-hall - - - - - - -	348—355
United Churches of Devonshire-square and Turners'-hall - - - - - - -	355—360
Curriers'-hall, Cripplegate - - - -	360—373
Pinners'-hall - - - - - - -	373—405
——— Sabbatarian Church - - - -	405—407
Goat-street, Horselydown - - - - -	409—416
Unicorn-yard - - - - - - -	416—430
Carter-lane - - - - - - -	430—461
Maze-pond - - - - - - -	461—490
White-street - - - - - - -	490—492
Snow's-fields - - - - - - -	492—495
Colliers'-rents - - - - - - -	495—497

PAGE

Joiners'-hall - - - - - - - 498—508
Tallow-chandlers'-hall - - - - - 508—511
Great Eastcheap - - - - - - 511—523
Goodman's-yard - - - - - - 524—525
Limehouse - - - - - - - 525—533
Ayle's-street and Angel-alley - - - - 533—541
Shadwell - - - - - - - 542
Prescot-street - - - - - - - 542—561
Little Alie-street - - - - - - 561—563
Little Wild-street - - - - - - 564—591
Eagle-street - - - - - - - 591—613



BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

REIGN OF KING WILLIAM III.

1688—1702.

THE happy Revolution of 1688 was a glorious era in the annals of the English nation. Without the shedding of blood, through the steady and persevering zeal of protestant patriots in opposing popery and tyranny, the nation found itself in possession of religious and civil liberty, procured for them by their illustrious deliverer, and guaranteed by a wise and equitable constitution.

William, Prince of Orange, followed by a band of men whose hearts God had touched, landed at Torbay Nov. 5. That memorable day *was as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain:* and he, who *putteth down kings and setteth up kings,* sent one to govern the nation who appeared to be actuated by that divine principle, *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.*

An event of this nature could not fail to be gratifying to the protestant Dissenters, whose lives had been rendered miserable by the heavy bondage of the two former reigns. They embraced the first convenient opportunity to express the gladness of their hearts, and on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1688-9, about

ninety Nonconformist Ministers * attended his Highness the Prince of Orange at St. James's, being introduced by the Earl of Devonshire, the Lord Wharton, and the Lord Wiltshire; when "one of their Ministers," says my Author, "addressed his Highness to the following effect,—That they professed their grateful sense of his Highness's hazardous and heroical expedition, which the favour of heaven had made so surprisingly prosperous, &c.

"That they esteemed it a common felicity, that the worthy patriots of the nobility and gentry of this kingdom had unanimously concurred with his Highness's design, by whose most prudent advice, the administration of public affairs was devolved in this critical juncture, into hands, which the nation and the world knew to be apt for the greatest undertakings, and so suitable to the present exigency of our case.

"That they promised the utmost endeavour, which in their stations they were capable of affording, for promoting the excellent and most desirable ends for which his Highness had declared.

"That they added their continual and fervent prayers to the Almighty, for the preservation of his Highness's person, and the success of his future endeavours for the defence and propagation of the protestant interest throughout the Christian world.

"That they should all most willingly have chosen that for the season of paying their respects to his Highness, when the Lord Bishop and Clergy of London attended his Highness for that purpose, (which some of them did, and which his lordship was pleased condescendingly to make mention of to his Highness,) had their notice of that intended application been so early

* The author of The Life of King William says,—"that go under the names of *Presbyterial* and *Congregational*." There can be no doubt but the latter term included the Baptists, in relation to their principles of church government.

as to make their more general attendance possible to them at that time.

"That therefore, though they now appeared in a distinct company, they did not on a distinct account, but on that only which was common to them and all protestants.

"That there were some of eminent note, whom age or present infirmities hindered from coming with them, yet who concurred in the same grateful sense of our common deliverance."

His Highness was pleased very favourably to receive this application, and to assure them, "That he came purposely for the defence of the protestant religion, and that it was his own religion, wherein he was born and bred; the religion of his country, and of his ancestors; that he was resolved, by the grace of God, to adhere to it, and to do his utmost endeavours for the defence of it, and the promoting of a firm union among protestants*."

On Feb. 6, the Prince and Princess of Orange, after swearing to rule according to the Act of Settlement, were declared King and Queen of England, to the great joy of all true protestants.

King William and Queen Mary were no sooner seated on the throne, than the Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, waited on their Majesties with an address of congratulation. Dr. Bates was selected to present it, who made the two following speeches.

To the King.

"May it please your Majesty,

"The series of successful events which has attended your glorious enterprise for the saving of these kingdoms from so imminent and destructive evils, has been so eminent and extraordinary, that it may force an acknowledgment of the Divine

* Life of King William, p. 169, 170. Third edition, London, 1705.

Providence from those who deny it, and cause admiration in all who believe and reverence it. The beauty and speed of this happy work are the bright signatures of His hand, who creates deliverance for his people. The less of human power, the more of Divine wisdom and goodness has been conspicuous in it. If the deliverance had been obtained by fierce and bloody battles, victory itself had been dejected and sad, and our joy had been tinged with afflicting bitterness. But as the sun, ascending the horizon, dispels without noise the darkness of the night; so your serene presence has, without tumults and disorders, chased away the darkness that invaded us. In the sense of this astonishing deliverance, we desire, with all possible ardency of affection, to magnify the glorious name of God, the author of it, by whose entire efficacy the means have been successful; and we cannot without a warm rapture of thankfulness recount our obligations to your Majesty, the happy instrument of it. Your illustrious greatness of mind in an undertaking of so vast expense, your heroic zeal in exposing your most precious life in such an adventurous expedition, your wise conduct and unshaken resolution in prosecuting your great ends, are above the loftiest flights of language, and exceed all praise. We owe to your Majesty the two greatest and most valuable blessings that we can enjoy;—the preservation of the true religion, our most sacred treasure,—and the recovery of the falling state, and the establishing of it upon just foundations.

"According to our duty, we promise unfeigned fidelity and true allegiance to your Majesty's person and government. We are encouraged by your gracious promise upon our first address, humbly to desire and hope, that your Majesty will be pleased by your wisdom and authority to establish a firm union of your protestant subjects in matters of religion, by making the rule of Christianity to be the rule of conformity. Our blessed union in the purity and peace of the Gospel, will make this church a fair and lovely type of heaven, and terrible to our antichristian

enemies. This will make England the steady centre from which a powerful influence will be derived for the support of reformed Christianity abroad. This will bring immortal honour to your name, above the trophies and triumphs of the most renowned conquerors. We do assure your Majesty, that we shall cordially embrace the terms of union which the ruling wisdom of our Saviour has prescribed in his word. We shall not trespass further on your royal patience, but shall offer up our fervent prayers to the King of kings, that he will please to direct your Majesty by his unerring wisdom, and always incline your heart to his glory, and encompass your sacred person with his favour as with a shield, and make your government a universal blessing to these kingdoms."

To which his Majesty was graciously pleased to return the following answer,

"I take kindly your good wishes, and whatever is in my power shall be employed for obtaining such a union among you. I do assure you of my protection and kindness."

Having addressed his Majesty in this manner, and received his kind answer, Dr. Bates then addressed the Queen in these terms.

"May it please your Majesty,

"Your happy arrival into your native country, and accession to the crown, have diffused a universal joy through this kingdom. It is an auspicious sign of public felicity, where supreme virtue and supreme dignity meet in the same person. Your inviolable firmness in the profession of the truth, and your exemplary piety, are the most radiant jewels in your crown. The lustre of your conversation, unstained in the midst of tempting vanities, and adorned with every grace, recommends religion as the most honourable quality, even to those who are averse from hearing sermons, and apt to despise serious instructions, and excitations to be religious. We humbly desire that your

Majesty would be pleased, by your wisdom and goodness, to compose the differences between your protestant subjects in things of less moment concerning religion. We hope those reverend persons who conspire with us in the main end, the glory of God and the public good, will consent to the terms of the union, wherein all the reformed churches agree. We shall sincerely address our request to God, that he will please to pour down in a rich abundance His blessing upon your Majesty's person and government, and preserve you to his heavenly kingdom."

The answer which her Majesty gave them was as follows:

"I will use all endeavours for the obtaining of a union that is necessary for the edifying of the church. I desire your prayers*."

This excellent monarch had discovered even personal friendship towards some of the dissenting ministers †;—the celebrated Mr. Fleming, author of The Apocalyptic Key;—the great John Howe, of Silver Street;—and Dr. Daniel Williams, who gave the Dissenters' Library, &c. in Red Cross Street;—and also, it is probable, Mr. Joseph Stennett, of Pinners' Hall. There were none of his Majesty's subjects who formed a more exalted opinion of the King's worth,—who were more grateful to God for the deliverance wrought by him from popery and tyranny,—and who were more duly sensible of their obligations for the shield of protection which the King had ever held over them.

The good will which the King manifested towards the protestant Dissenters was well known, and excited the jealousy and envy of their enemies; who, by their influence in parliament, contrived to prevent the intentions of the King towards them from being carried into effect; viz. that the dissenters should,

* Life of King William, p. 202, 203; and Neal's History of the Puritans, vol. iv. p. 606, 608.

† Life of King William, p. 383.

in common with all his protestant subjects, be rendered eligible to every post of honour and immunity in the state. It was the King's wish, that the Test and Corporation Acts, so far as they related to protestant Dissenters, should be removed; but this he could not accomplish: nor was even the Act of Toleration obtained without considerable difficulty.*

Many are the proofs which could be produced of the truth of

* This Act was entitled, "An Act for exempting their Majesties' protestant subjects, dissenting from the Church of England, from the penalties of certain laws." The preamble runs thus; "Forasmuch as some ease to scrupulous consciences in the exercise of religion may be an effectual means to unite their Majesties' protestant subjects in interest and affection."

The enactments of this just and gracious Act, though they did not repeal, yet restrained the operation of many persecuting Acts which had passed in former reigns; those in the 23rd, and the 29th, and the 35th of Elizabeth, and the 30th of Charles II.: but it excepted those of the 25th and the 30th of Charles II. The conditions were that certain oaths be taken, and the declaration registered. It enacted also that their meetings for worship should be public.

This Act also exempted ministers from the penalties of the Five Mile Act, and the Act of Uniformity, passed in the reign of Charles II. on condition that they took the prescribed oaths; that this declaration was registered; that they subscribed the Articles of the Church of England, with the exception of two Articles in favour of the Presbyterians, of three in favour of the Independents, and of three and a half in favour of the Baptists. It exempted ministers from serving civil offices. In addition to the Oath of Allegiance, they were required to subscribe the following declaration.

"*I, A. B. profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ his eternal Son, the true God, and in the Holy Spirit, one God blessed for evermore; and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be given by divine inspiration.*"

It enacted also that persons disturbing a congregation meeting in a registered place of worship, should be liable, on conviction, to a fine of twenty pounds, and imprisonment in default of payment.

these remarks, during the reign of this excellent monarch, to whose wise and powerful protection they were indebted for the uninterrupted liberty they had enjoyed. On several public occasions addresses were presented to the king by them as separate bodies. On the event of his Majesty's being preserved from the assassination plot in 1696, planned by the Tories and Jacobites, and encouraged by Louis XIV, an address, written by the Rev. Joseph Stennett, was presented on behalf of the Baptists. This was on April 9, 1696, when Mr. Stennett was introduced to the King by that illustrious warrior, the Right Honourable Charles Mordaunt, the third Earl of Peterborough, and the first Earl of Monmouth. This address excited a great deal of public attention, and was doubtless calculated to raise the Baptists in the estimation of his Majesty and the Court, who knew how to appreciate the unbought suffrages of men, that had always steadily opposed the measures of the Tory and Jacobite party. The following is the Address :—

"TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

"*The humble Address of the Ministers of the Baptist Denomination in and about the City of London, in behalf of themselves, and their respective Congregations.*

"May it please your Majesty,

"After having paid the grateful tribute of our humble thanks at the throne of the King of kings, for that signal favour wherewith his providence has blessed your Majesty, these your kingdoms, and the whole protestant interest abroad, in the seasonable discovery and defeat of the late barbarous conspiracy of the blood-thirsty enemies of your Majesty's government and life,—a life highly endeared to us by the many successive dangers to which your Majesty has so generously exposed it in the defence of all that is valuable to us, and by those remarkable instances

of the divine protection by which it has been as often guarded; we your Majesty's most loyal and obedient subjects, with all becoming respect, beg leave to congratulate your Majesty on this so eminent and happy deliverance.

"And we gladly embrace this occasion to assure your Majesty, that as we have enjoyed a share of the benign influences of your government, whereby both our *civil and religious liberties* have been so happily preserved and vindicated; so we shall make it our glory (as we account it our duty) to render your Majesty the utmost service we are capable of, in that sphere wherein the law allows us to move. And as a farther testimony of our fidelity and affection to your Majesty's person and government, we cheerfully follow the pattern of the honourable the House of Commons, in subscribing the association subjoined to this our humble address. Nor shall we cease to offer our fervent supplications to heaven, that the spirit of wisdom may continue to direct all your Majesty's councils; that the Lord of hosts may still succeed your army; that troops of associate angels may always guard your royal person; that your Majesty may have a long and prosperous reign on earth, and at length wear a crown of immortal glory in the kingdom of heaven. So pray,

Great Sir,
Your Majesty's most loyal
and most dutiful Subjects
and Servants."

The Rev. John Piggott, one of the London ministers, took advantage of the public day of thanksgiving, April 16, 1696, "for the discovery and defeat of the late detestable conspiracy against his Majesty's person, and of a designed invasion from France," to preach a sermon, which he afterwards published, with the title of "A good king and his people, the special care of heaven;" from Psalm cxliv. 10, *It is he that giveth salvation unto kings; who delivereth David his servant from the hurtful*

sword. To the discourse is prefixed a dedicatory epistle, "To the Right Honourable Charles Earl of Monmouth *," in which the author says, "I should not have presumed to inscribe so great a name in the front of so mean a discourse, had not your Lordship's signal loyalty to his present Majesty King William, your constant zeal for the liberties of England, and your extensive candour to all true protestants, conspired to encourage the attempt." The sermon breathes the warmest sentiments of loyalty and affection. "How often," says the preacher, "have we in this place† prayed that God would defend his Majesty's person against secret plots and open violence, and that the angels of God's presence might encamp round about him! To which we have had so visible a return, in his Majesty's preservation, and in the discovery of this execrable plot against his life and government, that, without incurring the suspicion of enthusiasm, we may conclude our prayers are answered, and have great reason to cry out with David, *Now we know that the Lord saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven with the saving strength of his right hand.*

"Therefore let us cheerfully own that God hath answered our prayers, and never cease to offer them to him for the good conduct of his Majesty's counsels, the farther success of his victorious arms, and the preservation and prosperity of his royal person; that his reign may be prosperous, and his days many; and that when he has finished time, he may leave his government upon earth to reign with Christ in heaven."

Another extract, which is all I shall make from this excellent and appropriate sermon, will show the flow of soul, which the preacher and his auditory, and doubtless the whole denomination

* The Earl of Monmouth was grandson of that excellent lady, the Countess of Peterborough, who was the constant friend and patroness of Archbishop Usher. This nobleman was the first person who advised the Prince of Orange to come over to England.

† Baptist Meeting, Hart Street, Covent Garden.

felt, when expressing their gratitude to God for preserving the monarch from this threatened destruction. "As heaven hath signalized William our lawful and rightful Sovereign by repeated acts of special protection, let us, who profess to be his obedient subjects, at all times afford him the most visible tokens of a sincere and signal loyalty. 'Tis true he has been engaged for some time in a war very expensive, but it has been for our safety, and at the hazard of his own life; and shall we regret parting with a little of our estates, to keep out a dreadful war from the bowels of our country, and for the defence of our lives and liberties?—'Tis not many years since, that we would have given the two-thirds of what we had, that the other part might have been secured to us. Therefore let us not murmur at our present expense, because it is to support the interest of a protestant King, whom a continued deliverance from successive dangers has marked out for the darling of providence; a prince in whom meet the prudence and courage of all his renowned ancestors; and whom not to value and esteem, would be to slight the God that hath girded him to battle."

The reign of the illustrious William, and his no less illustrious queen, who had secured to protestant Dissenters the palladium of their rights, and protected them in the free and uninterrupted exercise of their privileges, was, alas! but of short continuance. The pious Queen died Dec. 28, 1694, of the small pox, universally lamented: and the eighteenth century had not long commenced, when this excellent Prince, who had felt an equal regard for all genuine protestants among his subjects, was hurried by an accident to a premature grave. He died March 8, 1702, in the 52d year of his age, and the 14th of his reign. None but persons of jacobite and popish principles have attempted to traduce his noble character: in the estimation of the lovers of civil and religious liberty, he will always be reckoned among the most enlightened and beneficent princes that have ever filled the throne of England.

The death of King William was greatly lamented by the Baptists. Mr. John Piggott, and Mr. Richard Allen of Barbican, published funeral sermons upon that occasion. The former of these is entitled, "The natural frailty of Princes considered, in a Sermon preached the 29th of March, 1702, upon the sad occasion of the death of the late high and mighty Prince William the Third, King of England," &c. This also is addressed to the before named nobleman, after he had become Earl of Peterborough. In this dedication Mr. Piggott says, "I have glanced at a few things, with much simplicity, that aggravate the nation's loss;—a loss, vast as our hopes, and general as our griefs." The text is Psalm cxliv. 3, 4. *Put not your trust in princes, &c.* In the following quotation, the preacher delivers the political sentiments of the protestant Dissenters at that time, and of Dissenters at the present time; for it is presumed they are unaltered, and unalterable, while they continue consistent Dissenters. "No pretence of allegiance or duty, will justify our trust in a Prince, whose visible conduct declares a defiance to heaven, and whose acts of government are levelled against the laws of God, and those of the realm over which he presides. Magistracy is an ordinance of God; and we are bound by Divine Revelation, not only to fear God, but to honour the king. But if a prince once break his coronation oath, and invade the liberties of his people, he is no longer a prince, but a tyrant; for certainly the people have as just a right to the legal government of the prince, as the prince has to the legal obedience of the people." Mr. Piggott then cites, with expressions of approbation, the following extract from a sermon preached by Dr. Wake, Bishop of Lincoln, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, at St. James's Westminster, April 16, 1696. "And if our monarchy," says Dr. Wake, "be in the very frame and constitution of it a limited monarchy, and established not upon the imperial laws of a few visionary politicians, but upon the fundamental laws of its own making or allowing, then I

must solemnly profess, that I am either incapable of judging what sense or reason are, or it must follow that an absolute monarch, a prince not bounded by law, but governing only by the arbitrary motives of his own will, is no king of our acknowledging; our constitution knows no such monarch, nor did we ever oblige ourselves to obey such a one." Mr. Piggott adds, "Upon these principles proceeded the late happy Revolution of 1688, and by these the throne of our gracious Sovereign Queen Anne is established, though derived to her by a long succession of royal ancestors."

The preacher having produced a number of instances of the most excellent of the earth having been removed by death in the midst of their work, before the designs they had formed were accomplished, exclaims, "And thus it was with our late Sovereign of glorious memory; he was taken away by death, when the eyes of all Europe were upon him, waiting for the happy effects of his prudent counsels, and the success of his victorious arms. Yet, blessed be God, we have some good hope, that his thoughts will not so vanish with his breath, but that his excellent model, made from axioms calculated for the honour and interest of Europe, will be preserved by his illustrious successor to the throne; who has already given the utmost assurance to make good all the alliances into which his late Majesty entered with foreign princes, and to defend our religion and liberties. Indeed this is a mighty relief under our unspeakable loss; a loss we must needs deplore. Oh what a prince, what a mighty man is fallen in our English Israel! Can we forbear to mourn our loss? No, surely; it would argue a wretched stupidity not to be affected with so sad a providence. Surely none but a stoic, or a sworn enemy to the protestant religion, can refrain from adding a voice to the concert of mourners, when the death of so excellent a prince has deluged with sorrow so many kingdoms and nations.

"And how great a concern," adds Mr. Piggott, "did this prince discover for posterity, by his earnestly and seasonably recommending to the late parliament the succession to the crown in the protestant line, thereby extinguishing the hopes of a *supposititious* heir!" *

The King had recommended to his parliament, in his last speech from the throne, what he had always much at heart,—the union of all his protestant subjects. "Let there," said he, "be no other distinction heard of among us, for the future, but of those who are for the protestant religion and the present establishment, and of those who mean a popish prince and a French government." It was this parliament, that with great

* As a proof of the strong effects produced upon the hearers of Mr. Piggott by these loyal and constitutional addresses, the following anecdote is recorded. One of these, Mr. Samuel Burch, many years an eminent Deacon in the church of Little-wild Street, had such a lively recollection of the almost miraculous rescue of our religion and liberties at the Revolution, that nearly forty years afterwards, about the year 1730, he endeavoured to obtain public honour to the memory of the great and good King William. By his own industrious application alone, Mr. Burch obtained a petition to the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council, signed by several hundred gentlemen, merchants, and others of the city; praying for a small piece of ground, where Cheapside conduit had lately stood, on which they proposed, at their own expense, to erect an *equestrian statue* to the memory of that great deliverer of these nations, King William III. But on this petition being presented, one of the gentlemen of the Common Council said, "That as the conduit, which was a public nuisance, had been removed, he hoped that court would not permit another to be set up in the room of it." And so, on a debate, the petition was rejected. Whatever shade those, who disappointed so good a design, drew on the gratitude of the British metropolis; yet as this honest and loyal attempt of Mr. Burch met with the approbation of all true Englishmen and good citizens, it ought to be recorded as a lasting monument to his own memory.—*Funeral Sermon for Mr. Samuel Burch, by Dr. Joseph Stennett*, 1741. p. 48.

difficulty got an act passed, which secured the crown in the protestant line of the house of Hanover. God remarkably appeared on this occasion, in confounding the adherents of the popish princes of the house of Stuart. These were so numerous in the House of Commons, that the bill passed in one of its stages by a majority of only one! and it received the King's signature, and that by commission, but a few hours before the Monarch's lamented death. To these apparently fortuitous circumstances the English are indebted for the protestant government of the house of Brunswick, and the protestant Dissenters for all the blessings of a free toleration, which they have uninterruptedly enjoyed since the accession of that illustrious family to the crown of Great Britain.

In reviewing the period of this reign, it is natural to inquire how our churches improved these years of peace and prosperity, for the increasing of their number, and for extending the kingdom of Christ.

It is mortifying to find, that their well-meant efforts to unite the churches in a compact body, by means of an annual general assembly, composed of the pastors and messengers of the churches, proved abortive, and that it was so soon relinquished. The design, it is apprehended, was impracticable, on account of the independent and congregational order which is essential to the constitution of our churches; as from this principle being so rigidly observed, the decisions of the assembly, however wise, could not be enforced by any authority, but were merely recommended to the churches to be adopted or rejected, according as it should be agreed upon subsequently by themselves. It is not difficult to prove, that such a constitution as that of the Baptist churches is agreeable to the directions given in the Scriptures by our Lord and his Apostles, that it most exactly accords with the primitive pattern, and that it is best adapted to preserve purity of doctrine and discipline. But our history serves to war-

rant the conclusion, that our independent principles will always prevent any general union of the churches, and render nugatory any concentrated plan of co-operation. The fact seems to be, that no system of church-government can be devised, which may not be abused, or which is free from every thing objectionable. We know what evils have followed from an episcopal hierarchy, and from presbyterian synods; and it is in vain to deny, that placing all the power and authority in each individual congregation, for carrying on the order and discipline of the church, has been productive also of many disadvantages. If then we are compelled to make a choice of these imperfect systems, it is safe to follow what we believe to be most consonant with the authority of the great Head of the church; expecting that this will most conduce to his glory, and that the evils generated by the imperfections which belong even to good men, will be most effectually counteracted by a church governing its own affairs, without being subject to any external authority whatever. But then we must not expect even that apparent union which has been promoted by episcopacy or presbytery, when their convocations and assemblies have been able to enforce their decisions by the power of the state to which they have been allied.

The measures recommended to the attention of the churches by the general assemblies, were highly commendable. To procure a learned education for their gifted brethren who had been called to the ministry,—to assist those ministers with pecuniary help whose incomes were insufficient,—and to encourage their pastors to visit other churches, and to preach the gospel in the destitute parts of the kingdom,—were noble designs, and probably were generally approved by the churches as desirable objects. But these things could not be accomplished without large sums of money being annually collected; and the want of such funds was the rock upon which they split. It was recommended strongly, and the advice was mutually reiterated so long as the

assemblies were held, that every congregation would send the amount of their weekly contributions, and an annual collection. It might have been easily seen, however, that measures, the accomplishment of which demanded such a universal co-operation of liberal and self-denying efforts, would not be carried into effect. Besides, although there were certainly some, if not many, amongst both ministers and people, that were rich, it does not appear that they gave any considerable sums to lay the foundation necessary to raise a permanent fund, thereby setting an example to the poor of the churches. For the rich to call upon the poor to contribute a half-penny and penny a week out of their earnings, while they "withheld more than was meet" out of their large possessions, was not likely to produce any considerable annual sum towards objects in which they were not personally interested, and some of which they did not probably approve. It is likely then that the covetousness of the rich people belonging to the denomination, at a time when their money could have been used so beneficially in the cause of the Redeemer, operated more than any thing else in rendering the measures recommended by the Assembly abortive, and finally produced the destruction of the Assembly itself. The above remarks are founded upon the documents relating to this good, but ineffectual design, published in our first volume; to which the reader is referred, that he may judge whether they are well or ill-founded.

As to what relates to the spiritual prosperity of our churches in this reign, there is great cause to conclude, that instead of their abounding in *the work of faith, and patience of hope, and labour of love,* they experienced sad declensions; and that worldly prosperity, and a freedom from persecution, generated carnality of mind, and all its corrupt and defiling attendants. An extract or two, from some of the yearly epistles of the Western Associated Churches will prove the correctness of these remarks, and conclude this section.

The letter from an Association of seventeen churches assembled at Bristol in 1697, signed by all their pastors, and printed in our first volume, p. 537—540, gives a very affecting statement of the prevalence of pride and worldly-mindedness. But as our history is designed to commence chiefly with the eighteenth century, I shall pass over the letters of the three succeeding Associations, and introduce that of the General Western Association held at Bristol, in the year 1700, which was signed by twelve pastors, and contains the language of bitter lamentation. "We have," say they, "great cause for joy and rejoicing, that any of the churches of Jesus Christ are in peace, and do prosper in grace, gifts, and converts. We can truly say, Would it were the state of all our churches! But alas! whilst we are endeavouring to rejoice in the goodness of God, and the prosperity of some, our spirits are almost overwhelmed with sorrow, in considering the heart-breaking estate and dismal circumstances of others. The several cases laid before us, do too plainly discover, what sad work the devil, the world, and unsanctified corruptions do make, amongst some that fear the Lord in truth. And to speak plainly, brethren, it is to us a sad intimation of the presence and glory of God being withdrawn from his people, and a dreadful prognostic of judgments impending. And what can we expect will be our portion, without speedy repentance and timely reformation, but judgments far worse than hitherto any of our eyes have seen? God has given us liberty of conscience;—is this a suitable return to our God, to defile our own, and offend the consciences of others? We have peace without;—is it a right improvement of it, to fall upon and devour each other within? What can we expect, but either to be devoured of each other, or, if mercy prevent not, by restraining our fury, to have our gracious and tender Father taking the rod into his hand to part and chastise his contending children.

"Brethren, you are not only our joy, but our charge, our

flocks, over whom God has made us overseers; of whose souls we must give account to the chief and great Shepherd at the last day. Now that we may give up our accounts with joy and not with grief, having the testimony of your consciences in conjunction with our own, that we have been faithful; we, as your watchmen, seeing your danger, and knowing your sin, again now, as in times past, blow the trumpet, and warn you. We will free ourselves from your blood; pray see that you are not self-destroyers. Read at your leisure Ezekiel xxxiii. There you may see the duty of the faithful watchman, and what will be the reward of that man who is faithful to his charge, together with the happiness of that people or person that obeys, and the misery of them who will not take timely admonition. 'Tis, beloved, the groans of the spouse of Christ, the smart of the gaping wounds of the body of dear Jesus;—'tis the languishing state of the interest of our blessed Lord;—'tis the zeal we have for the name of Christ, the affection we bear to your souls;—that engageth us thus to express ourselves to you. We need not tell you what is your disease, that is plain; but give us leave to suggest to you what may be its causes, and how to cure it. You read, that by pride cometh contention. Pride, brethren, lies at the foundation of all your quarrels. Now, do but subdue pride, humble yourselves, and condescend to each other, and your contests will soon be at an end. We beseech you, take the apostle's advice; submit yourselves one to another. Be clothed with humility. Put on meekness and lowliness of mind, which are of great esteem with God. He will then look to you, walk with you, accept sacrifice from you. Need we say you want love to each other, and therefore cannot bear with, nor forbear each other? Love is a virtue that will do much for peace. It is so far from working ill, that it will not so much as think ill. *Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; walk in love, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.* Take the beloved apostle's advice, *Little children love*

one another; so you will appear to be true disciples of Jesus Christ. Let your love be without dissimulation; let it be with a pure heart, fervently. Sympathize with each other's infirmities; consider each other's temptations; forgive each other's sinful provocations; and we doubt not but, with the Lord's blessing, it will reconcile you at present, and prevent your future divisions. Brethren, give us leave to provoke you to love and good works. Remember the love of Jesus Christ. Let it constrain you to forgive, and endure any thing rather than crucify him afresh. Do not grieve or quench the Spirit of grace, whereby you may be sealed unto the day of redemption. Do not wound the consciences of the weak. Do not stumble any, in or out of the way of God; let not the way of God be evil spoken of through you. Do not grieve any faithful servant of Jesus Christ. Keep your garments from being spotted with the flesh. Give no occasion to Jew or Gentile, or to the church of Christ. Walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good word and work. Hereby you will glorify your heavenly Father, and give others occasion so to do, in the day of their visitation.

"We might propose many things to encourage you; but we will leave that to your particular servant, and not so much as mention what will be the benefits your souls will enjoy in life and at death, that are found in a conscientious discharge of their duty in this matter.

"Brethren, to provoke you (not to glory) we say, through the goodness of God, the debating of your unhappy differences and divisions hath made no division nor discord amongst us; but with calmness of spirit, and moderation, and forbearance of each other, we have done it; which gives us great hopes, that as the God of peace hath been with us in consulting, so the blessing of God will follow the advice given, that you may do your parts to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace. May the breaches of Zion be all made up; may peace and prosperity be

always within her walls; may the number of her converts be great; may her gifts increase; may her graces flourish, her weak souls be strengthened, her disconsolate comforted, her tempted succoured, her backsliding and apostatized children restored. May your souls, in particular, thrive, and your comforts and enjoyments be great. May you be rich in good works, and lay up for yourselves a good foundation for the time to come. That you may be followers of us, and of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises, is the sincere desire of your servants for Christ's sake,

ANDREW GIFFORD	GEORGE FOWNES	EDWARD ELLIOT
WILLIAM GOUGH	DAVID TOWNSEND	JAMES MURCH
THOMAS WHINNELL	ROBERT WASTFIELD	WILLIAM WILKINS
JOHN FORD	EBENEZER WILSON	JOHN BELTON."

The next year, 1701, at an association of twenty-seven churches, held at Taunton, June 14, we find them appointing the 16th of July, as "a day of solemn fasting and prayer, to humble themselves before the Lord for congregational, family, personal, and national sins, and to cry to God for the pouring out of his Spirit upon the churches, for the protection and prosperity of the whole interest of Christ, and for defeating the counsels of all his enemies, under the present commotions that are in the world."

It is more than probable, that these extracts present us with a faithful picture of the internal state and circumstances of our churches throughout the kingdom in 1702; as they do also with the character and talents of their faithful pastors. With what propriety then might the address of God by his prophet to Israel, have been applied to the Baptist denomination at the close of William's reign, *What could I have done more for my vineyard than I have done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?* Isaiah v. 5.

CHAP. II.

REIGN OF QUEEN ANNE.

1702—1714.

THE sorrow occasioned to the protestant Dissenters by the death of their friend and protector, the good King William, was in some good degree removed by the hopes that were entertained, that his successor, who had been educated in protestant principles, would imitate her pious and illustrious sister, the late Queen Mary. They rejoiced that the "suppositious heir" was prevented from coming to the throne by the last act of the late King's political life, which secured the crown in the line of the protestant succession. The Queen too had made a solemn pledge that she would "make the principles of the Act of Settlement the rule of her government, and the measures of her predecessor the model of her character."

The protestant Dissenting Ministers, of the three denominations in London, presented an Address of congratulation to the Queen on March 18, 1701-2.

The following notice of this event was given in the London Gazette of March 19. "Mr. Daniel Williams, with the rest of the protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the city of London, viz. Presbyterians, Independents and Baptists, waited on her Majesty, in a body, with an humble Address."

This Address was printed March 23, and is as follows:

"*To her most Excellent Majesty Anne, by the Grace of God, Queen of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.*

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, the protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the city of London, crave leave humbly to represent the deep sense we have of the unspeakable loss we and all your Majesty's good subjects suffer by the death of our late glorious Monarch, William the Third.

"But herein we are most sensibly and effectually relieved by your Majesty's most happy and peaceable succession to these crowns, whose rightful and undoubted title we acknowledge with the greatest sincerity, and whose constant zeal for the protestant religion is so justly renowned: for all which, with unfeigned joy, we bless and adore the Divine goodness.

"We further beg leave to assure your Majesty of our most dutiful affection and inviolable fidelity to your royal person and government; not doubting of our share in the many blessings of your Majesty's wise and happy reign, which we heartily pray may be long over us."

Judging from the manner in which this Address is printed in the Gazette, we should conclude that the Queen's reign commenced without any appearances of grace and favour towards the protestant Dissenters. The Queen gave no reply to their dutiful and loyal Address, not even the assurance that she would take them under her gracious protection. What was the cause of this cold and distant treatment does not appear: their Address was not perhaps sufficiently laudatory; or it might have been considered convenient to depress the hopes which they had been encouraged to exercise from the favour of the late Monarch.

It seems that the Baptists were not deficient in loyalty and zeal at this period. Mr. John Piggott, in the sermon mentioned in the last chapter, thus delivers his sentiments upon the accession of the

Queen, whom he calls that "admirable Princess:" "Let us not," says he, "forget to bless God for a protestant Queen, and her peaceable accession to the throne. This excellent Princess discovered a becoming zeal for the protestant religion, in opposition to popery, when she moved in a lower orb: we have just reason, therefore, to expect that her zeal will be as warm and regular now she acts in a more exalted state. And let us not cease to pray for the illustrious Queen Anne, that she may have wisdom as an angel of God, to go in and out before so great a people; that she may be the Deborah of our English Israel, and a nursing mother to all the reformed churches; that she may have a prosperous reign, a long life, a safe government, a secure palace, faithful counsellors, valiant armies, and a loyal people; that she may trample upon the necks of her enemies, and reign in the hearts of her subjects; and that, under the influence of her wise and mild administration, true and undefiled religion may revive and flourish: to which I wish all her Majesty's subjects may as heartily say amen, as do the protestant Dissenters of the three kingdoms."

The measures pursued by the Queen for the first years of her reign fully justified the hopes which the protestant Dissenters had entertained of her. The victory obtained by the allies under the command of the Duke of Marlborough at Blenheim, was celebrated by a public day of thanksgiving, Sep. 7, 1704. On that occasion Mr. Joseph Stennett and Mr. John Piggott preached and published sermons. From the latter of these an extract or two will be made, in proof of the gratification felt by the Dissenters with the administration of the Queen. Mr. Piggott's text is, Psalm cl. 2. *Praise him for his mighty acts.*

In enumerating the mighty acts of God, the preacher remarks, "Since her Majesty's happy accession to the throne of these kingdoms, Divine Providence has guarded her royal person, and caused a current of success to attend her arms. It is under her wise administration that we enjoy our civil and reli-

gious liberties, peace, plenty, and prosperity at home, while other countries are involved in the miseries of war."

In mentioning the reasons why praise should be offered to God for the late victory, Mr. Piggott states its effects in humbling the pride of the tyrant of France, Louis XIV. and then says, "What can a protestant nation expect if conquered by papists, whose resentments are deep, and their revenge high, being both excited by superstition? What can we expect less than to be hindered in the exercise of our religion, and to be deprived of our civil rights and properties, than which nothing can be dearer to us, both as Protestants and Englishmen?" In concluding the sermon the preacher says, "Let us earnestly pray that, as God has begun to humble a haughty tyrant by the hand of woman, so her Majesty may scourge his insolence, and lay all his honour in the dust. May success attend the counsels, and victory the arms, of Queen Anne; may she be the happy instrument of restoring an honourable and lasting peace to Europe; and may her piety transcend that of all her predecessors."

The sermon of Mr. Joseph Stennett on this occasion excited much attention. Some noble person presented a copy of it to the Queen without the knowledge of the author. The Queen having read it was so pleased with it, that she ordered a gratuity to be paid him out of the privy purse, to be presented him with her Majesty's thanks. This sermon was founded upon Judges v. 31. *So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord; but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.* "We are now assembled," says the preacher, "to look back with joy and gratitude on the late glorious victory it has pleased God to give the confederate arms against those of a great modern tyrant; and from thence to look forward with hope for the like future success against all the enemies of God and his church; and to sing in concert with Deborah, and the rest of the triumphing Israelites, *So let thine enemies perish,*" &c.

The protestant Dissenting ministers in London had hitherto

acted in separate bodies; but at the commencement of this reign they had agreed to form a committee, selected from the general body of approved ministers of the three denominations, in the cities of London and Westminster, and their vicinity. This committee consisted of four Presbyterian, three Independent, and three Baptist ministers, who were chosen by the respective denominations to which they belonged. The Baptists were now admitted to equal distinctions with ministers of the other denominations; and it is highly probable that this arrangement arose, in a considerable degree, from the eminence to which some of their ministers had been raised in the public estimation, by their learning and patriotism. Mr. Joseph Stennett was usually on the committees appointed to draw up their addresses to Government. That which was presented to the Queen after the battle of Blenheim was the production of his pen, and was highly commended by the Lord Chancellor Cowper. It was presented to the Queen at Windsor, June 17, 1705, by the Rev. John Spademan, who was introduced by the Lord Treasurer Godolphin.

"TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

"*The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, of the several Denominations in and about the Cities of London and Westminster.*

"May it please your Majesty,

"The late surprising progress of your Majesty's forces, and those of your allies in Flanders, under the command of the most illustrious prince the Duke of Marlborough; and of those in Spain, commanded by the noble Earls of Peterborough and Galway, happily supported by your royal navy, under the conduct of your prudent and valiant admirals, engages us humbly to congratulate your Majesty on so glorious an occasion. The signal answer it has pleased God to return to those devout

prayers, which your Majesty and your people by your directions addressed to heaven, inspires us with a joy equal to the mortification it gives your enemies. And while your Majesty ascribes your many victories to the arm of the Almighty, and repeats your royal commands to the people, to offer him solemn thanksgivings; we cannot but look on your Majesty's piety as an hopeful pledge of the like future success.

"As the important consequence of your Majesty's triumphs make a daily accession to your glory, so they give us an agreeable prospect of the speedy reduction of the power of France to its just limits, the restitution of liberty and peace to Europe, the effectual relief of the reformed churches abroad, and the security of that provision the law has made for a protestant succession to the crown of this kingdom.

"We gratefully acknowledge the share we have in the blessings of your Majesty's auspicious reign, which preserves to us both our civil and religious liberties; and take this occasion to renew to your Majesty, the assurance of our inviolable fidelity; to which not only our interest and inclination, but the sacred ties of gratitude and conscience oblige us. And we shall use our utmost endeavours, in our several stations, to promote that union and moderation among your protestant subjects, so often recommended by your Majesty as highly necessary to the common safety.

"May the divine Providence, that has made your Majesty not only the head of the protestant interest, but chief in the confederacy for the glorious cause of common liberty, give your Majesty the satisfaction of seeing both more firmly established than ever, by the influence of your counsels, and success of your arms. May your Majesty's exemplary piety, zeal for the reformation of manners, and parental care of all your people, even of those of remotest colonies, be eminently rewarded by the great God, with the constant prosperity of your government. May your reign be honoured with an happy union of your two kingdoms

of Great Britain; may your royal consort the Prince enjoy a confirmed health; may your Majesty continue to reign in the hearts of your people, and be late advanced to a throne of glory in the kingdom of heaven. So pray,

Your Majesty's most loyal,
most obedient Subjects
and Servants."

On Thursday, June 27, 1706, the day of thanksgiving appointed on account of the late glorious success of her Majesty's arms, and those of her allies, at Ramillies, Mr. Stennett preached a sermon from Deut. xxxiii. 29. This sermon contains an account of that battle, and a recital of the wonderful providences which had appeared in favour of the confederates. He says at the conclusion, "Let us bless God for the great favour he has shown us, in placing her Majesty upon the throne of these kingdoms, under whose happy government we enjoy so many peculiar blessings. Let the eminent rewards of her virtues, by the victories God has given her, incite us to the imitation of her royal example. Let us continually pray for the happiness and prosperity of her person and government, and contribute all we can to the support of her throne." Mr. Stennett published another sermon, preached May 1, 1707, the day appointed for a public thanksgiving for the happy Union of England and Scotland which then took place, from Judges v. 15. *For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.* The preacher exults on the union as a hopeful pledge of the prosperity of both kingdoms; and after applauding "the prudent conduct of the Queen and her counsellors, and the exact management of her commissioners," he thus devoutly prays for the Queen: "May the good providence which has given her the chief honour of breaking the chains of Europe, give her also the satisfaction of seeing its liberty entirely secured, and its peace restored; and the same divine hand that has succeeded her in uniting her protestant

subjects at home, make her the glorious instrument of re-establishing the reformed religion abroad. May the union that takes place this day be never dissolved by our follies and sins; may Ephraim never more envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. May England and Scotland for the future be as much one in inclination and affection, as they are obliged to be by their duty and interest; that what has been solemnly confirmed on earth, may be ratified in heaven, and that what God has joined together no man may put asunder."

Mr. Stennett published another "Sermon, preached February 17, 1708-9, the day appointed by her Majesty for a solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God, for the many and great successes of the confederate arms in the last campaign." The text was Gen. xiv. 18—20. After enumerating in a strain of patriotic ardour, the various victories which God had granted to the protestant confederates against Lewis XIV. the French tyrant, Mr. Stennett thus concludes: "And let us offer our fervent prayers to Almighty God for the preservation of her Majesty's person, the prosperity of her government, the success of her arms, and the support of her royal mind under the great affliction lately befallen her, by the death of the Prince her consort, amidst the triumphs we have been commemorating. Let those who minister in sacred things bless her Majesty in the language of the 20th Psalm; and let all the people say, Amen."

Little did this loyal and elegant preacher think, that the sun which now shone so bright, scattering such beams of glory around the head of her Majesty, was to be so suddenly eclipsed; that her counsels would be so entirely changed; that the instruments by which such successes had been obtained, would be so shamefully rejected; that the protestant Dissenters, who had hitherto shared in the peace and prosperity of her reign, were destined to have the cup of trembling again put into their hand; that persecution in its most insidious form would again stalk

through the land; and that, in imitation of the conduct of the Egyptian tyrant, an endeavour should be made to prevent them from multiplying, by abandoning all their little ones either to illiteracy or to infamy. *Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.*

Having introduced the reader to a knowledge of the state of religious liberty which prevailed at this period, we will now glance at the particular history of our churches in the metropolis from the commencement of this reign.

The last few years had made great alterations in the churches of the Baptist denomination in London. Many of their pastors, eminent for age and usefulness, had not been "suffered to continue by reason of death." It is remarkable that six of the most distinguished of them should have been taken away during the short period of three or four years. These were the venerable Hansard Knollys and William Kiffin; William Collins, Thomas Harrison, Benjamin Dennis, and Hercules Collins.* It is easy to conceive what an effect the loss of such ministers must have produced: at their deaths all exertion to promote a union of the churches, by means of a general assembly, seem to have been discontinued. While, however, the removal of aged and useful ministers is greatly to be lamented, it has been the occasion of bringing forward other ministers who have proved equally eminent, but who could not have been prominently engaged in conducting the public affairs of our churches, had not death removed their seniors in office.

The union which had subsisted between the churches in London and those of the Western Association, appears to have been dissolved from about the year 1694; but in the year 1702, the Western Churches resolved to stir up the languishing zeal of

* See the sketches of the characters and labours of these ministers in our second volume.

their brethren in the metropolis. I find that when the Western Association met at Trowbridge, the 26th and 27th of the third month, [June] 1702, it was agreed that "a letter should be drawn up by brother Gifford, brother Davison, and brother Elliott, to be sent from this Association to the churches in London of the same faith and order, to excite them to renew their Association with the churches in the country; and also to think of some proper method to promote the truth and interest of Christ which we profess."

It appears from this document, that in the opinion of the ministers of the Western Association, the churches in London were in so declining a state, as to need an epistle, stirring them up to active zeal in promoting the cause of Christ, and the prosperity of the denomination. It is evident, too, that the dissolution of the union of the London and Western Churches was not owing to any want of affection or zeal in the latter, as they had repeatedly solicited a restoration of their former connection. It is in vain to conjecture what were the reasons that operated with the churches in London to decline a co-operation so earnestly desired; but, so far as appears, no reply was sent to the letter written and prepared by these aged and respectable ministers; at least no notice whatever is taken of this matter in the Breviates of the Association Letters of subsequent years.

It is not unlikely, however, that though it did not produce a renewal of the connection with the churches in the West, it excited the ministers in London to attempt the formation of a separate Association of their own churches. Accordingly it appears, that at the beginning of the year 1704, thirteen churches had agreed to form such an Assembly, and to hold their first meeting at Lorimers' Hall, situated over against the north end of Basinghall Street.

The churches which agreed to form this new Assembly were the following; to which are annexed the names of their pastors and messengers.

1. BROAD-STREET, OLD GRAVEL-LANE, WAPPING.	Messrs. John Gardiner, Benjamin Cooper, Benjamin Gander, messengers.
2. PINNER'S-HALL.	Mr. Joseph Stennett, pastor. Messrs. Mark Hawkins, John Gee.
3. GOAT-YARD PASSAGE, HORSLEY-DOWN, SOUTHWARK.	Mr. Benjamin Keach, pastor. Messrs. Benjamin Stinton, Joshua Farrow.
4. PENNINGTON-STREET, VIRGINIA-STREET.	Messrs. Thomas Dawson, Humphry Burroughs, Rd. Glover.
5. CHURCH-LANE, LIMEHOUSE.	Mr. Leonard Harrison, pastor. Messrs. Robert Wynn, Stephen Bantinck.
6. ARTILLERY-LANE, SPITALFIELDS,	Messrs. Robert Cheney, Lionel Sharp, James Pope.
7. PAUL'S, SHADWELL.	Mr. Nathaniel Wyles, pastor. Messrs. John Brand, Caleb Hooker.
8. DEVONSHIRE-SQUARE.	Mr. Richard Adams, pastor. Messrs. Mark Key, John Toms.
9. LITTLE WILD-STREET.	Mr. John Piggott, pastor. Messrs. Richard Aland, Henry Clare.
10. BAGNIO-COURT.	Messrs. John Skinner, Thomas Lampett, George Capstaff.
11. COLLIER'S RENTS, WHITE-STREET, SOUTHWARK.	Mr. Richard Parkes, pastor. Messrs. Francis Sims, George Coombs.
12. LORIMERS'-HALL.	Messrs. Richard Byand, George Richardson, Richard Wilkinson.
13. JOINERS'-HALL, FRIAR'S-LANE, THAMES-ST.	Mr. Joseph Maisters, pastor. Messrs. Richard Pain, John Travers.

There were several other churches in London at this time; why they did not unite in this proposed assembly does not ap-

pear. It is not improbable that the old fears lest such a convention should interfere with the congregational order and independency of the churches, again prevented a general union;—an evil this, inseparable, perhaps, from that zeal for the rights of private judgment, which has been always rigidly maintained by our churches. If a larger proportion of mutual confidence had been exercised by brethren of the same sentiments, and a greater share of affection manifested towards sister churches, it would have prevented many of the strifes and divisions that have so lamentably prevailed, to the injury of the Baptist churches; which, in the opinion of the writer, are scripturally constituted, though, he thinks, in very many cases, they have been unscripturally governed.

This Association of churches met at Lorimer's Hall, April 17, 1704. At the commencement of the business a sermon was preached by the Rev. John Piggott, from Rom. xiv. 19; *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another.* This sermon was afterwards printed; it was entitled, "Union and Peace Recommended." In the introduction Mr. Piggott remarks, "It is not the business of a faction, but the cause of God in our hands, that I shall attempt to promote. My design is not to stir up strife, but to diffuse the grateful odour of charity, and to recommend union and a good correspondence to the churches of Christ." In discussing the subject, the preacher remarks, that the union and peace which he recommended must be in conjunction with holiness and truth; with order and distinction. Under the head which relates to "truth," he says, "Christians may differ in their notions and opinions about those matters which are less clearly revealed, or that are indifferent in their own nature; yet this may be without dividing in our affections, or making any breach in our Christian communion." Whatever principle in religion stikes at the foundation, forbids our union with those that patronize it; for so far as we unite with such, we countenance

error and betray the truth. It is criminal for those who adhere to the doctrine according to godliness, to coalesce with those that are coupled with damnable heresies; that deny the Lord that bought them, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men." He concludes with saying, "that the limits fixed by the apostle should be the bounds for regulating our communion, namely, those only who acknowledge *one Lord, one faith, and one baptism.*"

Under the head which relates to "order and distinction," there are some correct statements as to the manner in which the discipline of our churches is to be maintained. He says, "Care indeed ought to taken, that the privileges of the church may be secured, and yet that the power of the pastor be not infringed; and when it is thus, they mutually strengthen and assist each other. It is the work of an elder, not only to feed but to govern. And agreeably hereunto, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, gives direction to the governed concerning their deportment and behaviour. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you.* The government which an evangelical pastor is to exercise, must not be despotic and arbitrary, but the church must be governed with her own consent. It is not a stately domination, or an imperious sway, but a ruling by meek persuasion, agreeable to the rules exhibited in divine revelation. What though ordained ministers are called bishops or overseers in the New Testament, yet they are not to lord it over the people's faith, but to act as helpers of their joy. And in what sacred society soever there is a strict regard had to the order and distinction Christ hath fixed in it, there will be mutual endearments betwixt the officers and private members, which will lay a foundation for a lasting union. But when the order of Christ is inverted, and the distinction he has made between the officers and people confounded, and both

brought upon the same level, such lie exposed to all the evils of anarchy; for people then will act as the children of Israel when without a king, where every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

The learning and eminence of this worthy minister must have given great weight to the sentiments which were so powerfully and energetically enforced upon this occasion, and have had a strong tendency to produce the union and peace which the Association was designed to accomplish.

After the sermon was concluded, and the blessing of God had been sought by prayer to rest upon their deliberations, the Rev. Richard Adams was chosen moderator; the letters of the churches were read, submitting different subjects for the discussion and decision of the Assembly; and the following rules were adopted as preliminary regulations.

1. "That what this Assembly shall agree to, shall be proposed to the several churches whose messengers are present, only by way of *advice*, and not be accounted binding to any church, any further than the approbation and consent of such church shall make it so.

2. "That to prevent all interruptions and disorder in debates, every person shall stand up when he speaks, directing his discourse to the moderator; and no other person shall speak till he sits down.

3. "That no opinion, wherein any of the churches represented in this Assembly differ from the rest, shall be controverted in this assembly.

4. "That the several matters recommended to the consideration of this Assembly, by letters from the churches, be considered in the same order in which the letters were received."

The meetings of the Assembly continued for three days, and some opinion may be formed of their proceedings from the result of their deliberations: as also what was the state of the churches to which these decisions were recommended.

From the contiguity of the London churches it is highly necessary that some general rules should be observed respecting the reception of those persons as members, who may have belonged to any other of the churches. The Assembly accordingly resolved, "That it is an irregular practice for one church to receive members from another without recommendation, or at least without sending messengers to the church from which such persons come, in order to their regular dismission; and that it is the duty of such persons, who desire to be dismissed from one church to another, respectfully to signify their reason or reasons for such a dismission, to the church to which they belong."

The great number of Dissenting Ministers in London, and the variety of talents and gifts at all times possessed by them, have had a tendency to draw away persons of an unsettled mind from their own places of worship. And it should seem there were such at that period, as the late Rev. John Newton used to designate "the flying camp." To check such a practice the Assembly determined, "That the members of each church ought ordinarily to attend the worship of God in the church to which they stand related: and that to make a common practice of deserting the assemblies to which they belong, is a great discouragement to the ministers of those churches; that it occasions the neglect of the poor among them; and that the continuance of such a practice has a tendency to weaken, and will perhaps, in time, issue in the dissolution of some churches."

Another subject to which their attention was called, was that of the separations which occasionally take place in congregational churches. Such events are often the occasion of painful regret, being sometimes attended with very disgraceful scenes of bad temper, producing strife and debate. It must however be acknowledged, while every step should be taken to prevent such separations, that they are at times, as in the choice of a

pastor, unavoidable. All the members having an equal right to choose a minister whose knowledge and gifts are considered best adapted for their individual edification, it is not surprising that difference of judgment should exist, even among persons equally wise, and equally pious. In such cases there remains no alternative, but for the dissatisfied parties to remove their communion from a church, where a minister whom they disapprove is settled as the pastor. There have also been some instances, where a regard for purity of doctrine and discipline has rendered it an imperative duty to give a practical protest (the only effective one that can be given) against such errors, by withdrawing from such a society. To meet such cases, the Assembly resolved, "That in case the *minor* part of any church break off their communion from that church, the church state is to be accounted to remain with the *major* part. And in case the *major* part of any church be fundamentally corrupted with heresy and immorality, the *minor* part may and ought to separate from such a degenerate society, and either join themselves to some regular church or churches, or else, if they are a competent number, constitute a church state by a solemn covenant among themselves."

The controversy which took place among many of the London ministers on the occasion of the republication of the works of the Rev. Tobias Crisp, was prevailing at this period; and the subject was brought under the notice of the Assembly.*

* Crosby, who quotes Nelson's Life of Bishop Bull, p. 259, says, (vol. iv. p. 384—387.) "Soon after the Revolution, a considerable progress was made in the attempt for a coalition between the Presbyterians and Independents. But great debates arose between them, the occasion of which was the reprinting of Dr. Crisp's works, (who was noted for his *Antinomian notions*, though reputed a very pious man,) with some sermons added; to which a paper was prefixed, subscribed by several ministers. A sort of apology for this was afterwards published, which was prefixed to Mr. Flavel's Discourse, entitled, 'A Blow at the Root; or the Cause and Cure of Mental

By the following decision it appears that they strongly condemned the Antinomian principles, and supported those which were called, by the friends of Dr. Crisp, the Neonomian. They say, "It is the opinion of this Assembly, that the doctrine of sanctification by the imputation of the holiness of Christ's nature does, in its consequence, render inherent holiness by the Holy Spirit unnecessary, and tends to overthrow natural as well as revealed religion." *

Errors.' Dr. Williams wrote against the errors of Dr. Crisp's sermons, and to his book the names of several ministers were subscribed. Mr. Lorimer wrote an apology for those subscriptions. A great variety of pamphlets were published on both sides, which made a great noise and stir. At length there came out, in 1692, a paper entiled, 'The Agreement in Doctrine among the Dissenting Ministers in London.' This was subscribed by many, but it answered not the end, for the debates were still continued. One party suspected, or at least pretended to suspect, the other of verging too much towards *Arminianism;* and they on the other side charged their opponents with encouraging *Antinomianism.* Several papers were thereupon drawn up and subscribed, in order to an accommodation. There was a first, and second, and third paper of this sort; and those very papers excited new altercations and debates, which were carried on with no small heat and pettishness; and a number that stood by could hardly tell what it was they contended about. Several new creeds were formed, and still objected to by some or other, either as too large, or too strait; too full, or too empty. The world was wearied out with pamphlets and creed-making. At length the Bishop of Worcester, Dr. Stillingfleet, and Dr. Edwards, were appealed to, who gave their judgments, &c. No reasonings, expostulations, or complaints could avail to extinguish the flame that was kindled. At length there was a design formed by the Independents, in 1694, to exclude Dr. Williams out of the Tuesday lecture at Pinners' Hall; which not succeeding, a new lecture on a Tuesday was established at Salters' Hall: and this put an end to all attempts at promoting a coalition; though after this the controversy ended, and the angry disputants learned to live in peace, though still differing in opinion."

* As a specimen of the incautious and erroneous manner in which Dr.

This controversy continued for more than seven years, and some of the ablest pens amongst the Dissenters and Episcopalians were employed upon it. It is deeply affecting to find that any ministers of reputation should have been found to defend the unscriptural and dangerous sentiment of Dr. Crisp, viz. that "there was a commutation of persons between Christ and the sinner:" so that Christ became the sinner instead of the person for whom he died; and the sinner became as holy as the Saviour in whom he believed. That some of the members of the Baptist churches should have embraced this specious pretence for exalting Christ, and should have been caught in the snare which was spread for their feet by a system so flattering to corrupt human nature, is not at all wonderful. But there is no evidence that any of our ministers at that time preached or defended this corrupt system: indeed the unanimous resolution of nearly forty persons, ministers and others, protesting against it, as in its tendency superseding the sancti-

Crisp speaks, the following quotation is given, (p. 272.) "Let me speak freely to you, and, in so doing, tell you, that the Lord hath no more to lay to an elect person, yet in the height of iniquity, and in the excess of riot, and committing all the abominations that can be committed;—I say, even then, when an elect person runs such a course, the Lord hath no more to lay to that person's charge, than God hath to lay to the sin of a believer; nay, God hath no more to lay to the charge of that person, than he hath to lay to the charge of a saint triumphant in glory."

I should not wish to copy other passages of a similar nature; because I feel certain that the sentiments are entirely opposed to the doctrine of Paul, who, speaking of himself, (whom no one will doubt to have been an *elect* person,) and of other believers, says, *And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others*, Eph. ii. 2. But if unconverted persons are the children of wrath, how is it possible that they should be as free from the charge of guilt as a saint triumphant in glory? A system opposed to the plain declarations of Scripture, however specious it may appear, and tending to lull persons to sleep in sinful security, must "tend to overthrow natural, as well as revealed religion!"

fying work of the Holy Spirit in producing holiness of heart and life, and tending to overthrow not only revealed but natural religion, speaks loudly for the purity of doctrine which prevailed in the denomination upon this all-important sentiment; —a sentiment which, because directly opposed to the *sanctification of the Spirit,* is as much *another gospel, perverting the gospel of Christ,* as any opinion which strikes at the sufficiency of the merits of Christ alone to procure the justification of the ungodly sinner who believeth in Jesus.

Many causes had united to render the members of our churches indifferent towards assisting in the maintenance and support of their pastors. Some of the pastors had been compelled, during the persecuting times, to labour with their hands, that they might provide for the necessities of their families; and by continuing in the businesses which their industry had raised, they had no need of the assistance of their churches. But when these worthy and disinterested, but mistaken pastors were removed, the churches were not prepared nor inclined to raise the means of support for their successors. It was no wonder, therefore, that ministers should be exposed to considerable difficulties, who settled in such situations; and that even in London, which has always been considered the emporium of wealth, such poor pastors should have been found. It is to be hoped the congregations they served were also poor; otherwise an appeal made on their behalf to other churches, who had their own ministers to support, cannot be reconciled with the principles of justice. The following resolution was adopted by the Assembly;—"That it be recommended to the several *associate* churches represented by this Assembly, that each church do make an annual collection, for the relief of such ministers in and about the city of London, dwelling within the bills of mortality, as have but a small allowance from the churches to which they belong."

It had frequently been a subject of controversy in the deno-

mination, whether the laying on of hands upon ministers at their ordination was proper or necessary. Some churches not only pleaded strenuously for this practice, as an apostolic and primitive custom; but also contended for the necessity of laying on the hands of pastors upon deacons when elected to that office, as well as upon persons who had been baptized, introducing them into the church by this rite, which answered, as they contended, to the ancient practice of confirmation. The Assembly gave no opinion upon the latter practice. It was, perhaps, one wherein some of the churches differed from the rest, and which they had agreed should not be controverted by them. But respecting the two former, they say, "It is the opinion of this Assembly, that the ordination of persons to the office of an elder, or that of a deacon, by the imposition of the hands of the eldership, is an ordinance of Jesus Christ still in force."

Respecting the importance of literature to those who had devoted themselves, and had been called by the churches to the Christian ministry, they express themselves most decidedly favourable to it. This appears to have related to young ministers who could devote the whole of their time to academical pursuits; but as there were others whose engagements, and probably whose families, demanded their whole time and attention, they were desirous of procuring for them the best helps, which in their circumstances they could obtain, from sound theological writers. They therefore resolved, "That it would be highly useful, that a fund of money be settled and maintained, either by subscriptions or collections, as each church shall think most expedient, for the education of pious young men, who are in communion with one or other of these associate churches, and are blessed with promising gifts, in order for the better fitting them for the work of the ministry; and also for the furnishing others, who have not time to attain the knowledge of the tongues, and some other parts of useful

learning, with such English books as may be thought most proper for their assistance and improvement: and that this be recommended to each particular church."

It is pleasing to observe the strong features of that pious feeling which appears to have animated the members of these assemblies of our brethren. They always adopted a resolution expressive of their deep humiliation on account of the state of religion in their respective churches; and also to declare their sense of the necessity of a divine influence to make their labours successful. On this occasion they resolved as follows;—"That it would tend much to the edification of the churches, frequently to keep days of fasting and prayer in each congregation; and sometimes for several churches to assemble together on such occasions, when it can be conveniently attained."

The measures adopted by this Assembly were all calculated to promote such peace and union as would prove permanent and beneficial. Let it be borne in mind too, that these measures came recommended by the venerable names of Keach, of Stennett, of Piggott, and of others, who were well known in that day as the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ; and some of whom are still reverenced for their learned and useful works, and for the success of their labours in the churches of Christ. The letter which was sent to the churches by this Assembly, enforcing the above recommendations, I have not seen; nor has Crosby, from whom I have selected the above particulars, made even an extract from it.

The Assembly met again March 25, 1705, at Joiners' Hall. It appears that four of the churches had withdrawn; namely, those in Broad Street, Old Gravel Lane; Devonshire Square; Bagnio Court; and Lorimers' Hall. Another church had joined them, assembling in Paul's Alley, Barbican, of which Mr. Richard Allen was the pastor.*

* For an account of Mr. Allen, see vol. ii. p. 444.

The public meeting on this occasion commenced with a sermon delivered by the Rev. Joseph Stennett. The thanks of the Assembly were afterwards voted him for the sermon, and he was desired to print it. This request was complied with. It is the first sermon in the second volume of his works : the text is Phil. ii. 21 ; *For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.* Under the third head, in which this eloquent minister proposes to shew the reasons why ministers and people should seek *the things of Jesus Christ rather than their own,* there are some striking remarks.

After choosing Mr. Stennett moderator, and imploring the divine blessing upon their deliberations, they proceeded to business, by reading the several letters from the churches, and attending to any verbal communications from the messengers. They also permitted four brethren to attend, who were not members of the Assembly, but who had requested to be present as auditors of their debates and agreements ; these were the Rev. Messrs. John Ward, Benjamin Cooper, Mark Key, and Ebenezer Wilson. Mr. Cooper had been a messenger to the last meeting from the church in Old Gravel-lane, Wapping ; Mr. Key from that in Devonshire-square ; Mr. Ward, it is presumed, was pastor of the church at Luton ; and Mr. Ebenezer Wilson had lately been invited by the church near Spitalfields.

They agreed to the same preliminary articles as at the former meeting ; they adopted the former circular letter, after having carefully reconsidered it, paragraph by paragraph ; and they resolved again to recommend it to the attention of the several churches belonging to the Assembly.

The business of the different meetings was conducted with the greatest unanimity : it was rare to observe one differing opinion among them ; every thing was debated with the greatest calmness and deliberation ; and at the conclusion of the accounts of their consultations, they add, "we cannot omit to mention with great joy and thankfulness to God, the spirit of

love and peace which appeared in every representative at this Assembly."

The sentiments which they had delivered in the first year, respecting the necessity of order in the formation of new churches, and the reception of those who had been members of other churches, they were now called to act upon, in relation to a congregation of Baptists, meeting at Winchester-house, near Saint Mary Overie's Dock, in Southwark. In an appendix to the address to the associated churches, they say, "There are several persons who call themselves Baptists, that pretend to have formed themselves into a church of Christ different from the baptized churches in London, and are composed chiefly, if not only, of persons under the censure or dealing of some churches, or who had, after a disorderly manner, rent themselves from sundry churches in this *Association*, and from other *baptized churches;* and they receive persons into their said society without due recommendation from, or satisfaction to the respective churches to which such persons did belong; and to take a liberty to reflect upon and revile the baptized churches, and their ministers. All these allegations being fully proved to the satisfaction of this Assembly, it was agreed,

1. "That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that the said persons meeting at Winchester-house are not, nor ought to be esteemed, nor owned as a church of Christ.

2. "That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that it is irregular and disorderly for any members of a baptized church, to join themselves to them, or to frequent, or in any way encourage or countenance the said meeting at Winchester-house.

3. "And we do recommend it to all the churches in this Association, to dissuade their members from any such practices; and to mark them that attend such an irregular meeting, as walking disorderly."

It is not stated what was the particular circumstance in which these persons were different from the other churches.

It is, however, sufficiently apparent, that some of them had been members of the associated churches, but had been so dissatisfied with the proceedings of this Assembly the year before, as to rend themselves from them, and to speak reproachfully both of the churches and their ministers. Under such circumstances it was not to be expected they would be countenanced by the ministers and churches that had been treated by them with so much contempt. It is scarcely, however, to be supposed, that an assembly over which Mr. Joseph Stennett presided, would proceed so far upon a mere difference of opinion respecting a point of order, as to say of a number of professed Christians uniting together for the worship of God, that "they were not a church of Christ," and "ought not to be so esteemed or owned" by other Christians. It is therefore highly probable, that the difference between them and other churches of the Assembly, related to the *doctrinal* sentiment which the Assembly had so strongly exposed, and so decidedly condemned, at its last meeting. That persons who had embraced the Antinomian creed of Dr. Crisp were found in the churches, is evident from the subject having been brought before the Assembly; and that the terms in which the Assembly had expressed their sentiments would prove highly offensive to those who maintained the unscriptural crudities, and the unhallowed opinions of Dr. Crisp, may be easily conceived by those who have observed the effects produced upon the minds and tempers of those who embrace that creed. Not doubting that they are the only persons who understand the gospel, they are righteous in their own eyes, and despise others. Heady and high-minded, they listen to no reasoning, and appear in general to be out of the reach of argument. Hence it has followed, that though the Antinomian creed has been so often exposed as anti-scriptural in its principles, unholy in its influence, and at variance with the design and spirit of the gospel of Christ, it has in every age been embraced by ignorant and corrupt persons

professing Calvinism, on account of its accordance with their contracted minds or unsanctified hearts. Upon the supposition that these were the principles and spirit of the people who assembled at Winchester-house, the writer is of opinion that the Assembly acted wisely in putting the churches upon their guard against persons maintaining such dangerous sentiments.

Nothing further is known of these people. The place was used by a Baptist church in 1692, and their ministers, Mr. Richard Baxter and Mr. David Fowler, belonged to the General Assembly. Mr. Wilson, in his History of Dissenting Churches, says, "Of these persons we know nothing, excepting that they appear to have been fifth-monarchy men, and to have been far gone in enthusiasm. The former of them published a book, with a quaint and disgusting title, which has been falsely attributed to the famous Mr. Richard Baxter, of Kidderminster." Had these ministers been of the character described, they would not have been admitted to the Assembly.

Mr. Stennett had, two years before this, published his learned reply to Mr. David Russen's work, entitled, *Fundamentals without a Foundation, or a True Picture of the Anabaptists.* In this work he displayed such solid learning and unanswerable arguments, that his friends wished him to undertake a complete History of Baptism. This matter was brought before the Assembly by the representatives of the church in Barbican, requesting that the Assembly would endeavour to prevail with, and give due encouragement to Mr. Stennett, their president, to write such a work in defence of the practice of the baptized churches. The Assembly was informed, that at several meetings with Mr. Stennett upon the subject, he had been prevailed upon to write the title-page, and the heads of several chapters, proper for such a work. At the desire of the Assembly Mr. Stennett read this plan, but intimated that he feared the circumstances of his health, and other affairs, would not permit him to undertake to accomplish it. It was however unanimously

agreed, "That it is the opinion of this Assembly, that such a history as that proposed would be of great use and benefit to the public; that Mr. Stennett be, and he is hereby intreated to write the said history; that this Assembly will to the utmost encourage and promote the said work: that a committee be appointed to consult Mr. Stennett more particularly about the said history, and to consider the best method of defraying the charge thereof; that they likewise take the assistance of any other persons whom they think proper, whether they relate to the Association or not; and that the said committee consist of one member of each church in this Association, to be approved by the said churches, and now nominated and appointed by their representatives.

The following persons were selected to conduct this business, four of whom were competent to act:—

MR. JOHN TAYLOR	MR. ABRAHAM ATKINS
JOHN VALLEY	RICHARD ALAND
JOHN BRAND	JOHN BURROUGHS
ABR. HICKMAN	HUMPHRY BURROUGHS.
GEORGE JARVIS	RICHARD WILKINSON.

They agreed also to hold their meeting at Deering's Coffee-house, Finch-lane, on the next Monday afternoon, and to adjourn from time to time at their pleasure.

This excellent work, however, (respecting which more particulars are given in our second volume, p. 403,) was never finished.

It does not appear how long these annual meetings of the associated churches in London continued. It is probable that the deaths of Mr. Stennett and Mr. Piggott, which took place in the same year, (1713,) and within a few months of each other, would greatly contribute to such an event; as there were no ministers of equal talent and celebrity to unite the energies and

direct the measures of the churches. Of these eminent men it might be truly said, as of David and Jonathan, *They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided.*

It was at the beginning of 1708, that the enemies of civil and religious liberty began to exert their influence at court, and the Queen was drawn into a plan to support those measures which were doubtless designed to prevent the protestant family of Hanover from coming to the crown. They wished to introduce the son (who was by many thought to be only the pretended son) of the late King James II.; that is to say, of the Queen's father, who, when he could not tyrannize over his subjects, had meanly abdicated the throne. The change which now took place in the affairs of state, gave new life to the expiring power of the French monarch, and eclipsed the glory of her Majesty's reign, which had hitherto been crowned with laurels of victory, so as to fill her friends with wonder, and her enemies with fear.

At the time when parliament was convened this year, public affairs were brought to so critical a juncture, that many eminent citizens, with the approbation of several noble and zealous asserters of the English liberties, concluded that a paper of advice should be presented by the citizens of London to their representatives. That a Dissenting Minister, and a Baptist, should be selected to draw it up, gives us a strong idea of the distinguished eminence of the character of Mr. Joseph Stennett, who by that circumstance is again brought forward in our history.

This service was executed by Mr. Stennett with his usual ability; and though the paper, on some account which is not mentioned, was not presented, yet, as it shews the sentiments and feelings of the Baptists, at a period when the civil and religious liberties of Englishmen began again to be invaded, it ought to find a place in this history. It is as follows:—

"Gentlemen,

"As you have the honour to be chosen to represent this great city in the ensuing Parliament, so it is hoped it will not be disagreeable to you to know the sense of the generality of your electors, concerning the present posture of public affairs; and after what manner it is expected you will acquit yourselves of the trust reposed in you.

"It is your fortune to be chosen at a very critical juncture of time, and the august Assembly of which you are to be a part, will, in all appearance, have before them some of the most important affairs that ever were debated in Parliament; on the prudent management of which, under the divine Providence, not only the happiness of this city and nation, but the welfare of the whole protestant interest, and the greatest part of Europe, depends.

"All the world is convinced of the truth of that which her Majesty has so justly observed; that the late insolent attempt of the Pretender must needs have been encouraged by secret enemies of the government here at home; and their party appears too considerable to be either despised or neglected, which renders it highly probable, that a British Parliament will think it necessary to inquire into the hidden springs of that wicked and bloody design, that by detecting the treason of our intestine enemies, and by bringing the chief of them to justice, the rest may not flatter themselves that they may commit the blackest crimes with impunity; and that their confederates abroad, by observing the strength of the British government, may be discouraged from engaging in the like presumptuous enterprizes for time to come.

"We therefore rely on your integrity and zeal, that when the *plot*, on which the intended invasion was founded, comes to be examined, you will contribute all you can to the discovery of that treachery, and concur with those prudent measures which the wisdom of the nation shall see fit to take, for the

security of her Majesty's person and government, from such horrid conspiracies for the future. A seasonable and nice scrutiny into this dark affair, will probably bring to light some of the mysterious causes of those uncommon difficulties under which the government has so much laboured, and may open a way to some proper method for the revival and security of trade; which is an article the representatives of this city can never forget, without being guilty of a negligence and supineness not to be forgiven. Therefore we cannot forget to charge you with the necessary care of making in Parliament a full and lively representation of the calamities we have long suffered, sometimes for the want of convoys and cruisers; sometimes by their unaccountable delays, and the unseasonable time of their sailing; as well as by the undue pressing of men out of our merchant ships, by which our trade has been almost entirely ruined, and her Majesty's revenue very much diminished.

"We, moreover, earnestly desire you would embrace every occasion that may offer in a parliamentary way, to consolidate the happy union of England and Scotland, and to render it as complete as possible: for you cannot be ignorant how much the welfare of Great Britain, and indeed of all Europe, is concerned in the keeping of that union inviolable; and how much the confirmation of it will tend to mortify all those who wish ill to our happy constitution. And how much soever peace is to be desired, especially after a long and expensive war, yet it is so evident that it is impossible for the *balance* of power in Europe to be preserved, and the trade of this nation to be retrieved, without reducing the exorbitant power of France to just limits, and restoring the crown of Spain to the house of Austria; that we think it much more eligible to bear the burthen of a just and necessary war, than weakly to fall into the obvious snare of a *dishonourable and destructive* peace.

"We hope, therefore, you will do all that becomes our representatives to support the glorious cause of *liberty*, in which

her Majesty and the nation are engaged, till peace can be attained on honourable and lasting terms, according to the unanimous resolution of the late Parliament.

"We conclude in assuring you, that if you are desirous of obliging us, you can do it in nothing so much as in shewing us a forward zeal for the vindication of her Majesty's rightful and lawful title to the crown, (a title founded on the just and glorious principles of the late happy revolution,) and for the security of the succession in the protestant line; and in readily complying with all such measures as shall be thought proper, to promote *union* and *moderation* among *protestants*, and to render them all as easy to one another, as useful to the community, and as serviceable to the government as possible. And all this we give you in charge, as you will answer the neglect of it to God, to your own conscience, to her Majesty, to the nation in general, and in particular to the city you represent.

"And now, Gentlemen, we promise ourselves that your constant attendance in your places in the House of Commons, your assiduous application to the public business, and the peculiar regard to all the important matters we have recommended to you, will confirm us in the good opinion we have of your fidelity, and the other qualifications necessary to the discharge of so great a trust, as that of our *civil* and *religious liberties*; the preservation and security of which we commit to your care."

The situation of the Dissenters, in consequence of the prevalence of high church and Tory principles, became very perilous. The envy, hatred, and malice, which the favour of the court towards them, from the period of the revolution, had excited, broke out in the year 1710, in disgraceful scenes of bigotry and intolerance. The immediate occasion of these outrages, which were displayed by an infuriated mob, in destroying their meeting-houses in London, was the trial of the Rev. Dr. Henry Sacheveral, in the House of Lords, for having preached

a sermon in defence of the principles of non-resistance and passive obedience. This ecclesiastical firebrand, it is true, was found guilty; but the sentence that was pronounced was so lenient, that, the friends of the Doctor considering themselves to have obtained a victory, illuminations took place in London and throughout the country; and this idol of Toryism went through the West of England, enjoying a kind of triumph, and spreading the embers of faction in every place, to the annoyance of protestant Dissenters. This is not to be wondered at, as the Queen had now become the supporter of their enemies. She every day had attended the trial in the House of Peers, and in her way was greeted by the acclamations of the populace, who shouted "God bless your Majesty and Dr. Sacheveral."*

Advantage was now taken of an Act which had been passed in the 13th year of Charles II. for the purpose of harassing the Nonconformists, making it necessary that every schoolmaster should be a full and entire Conformist. This Act had not been repealed, and no notice was taken of it in the Act of Toleration, so that the Dissenting schoolmasters were exposed to its penalties. Several prosecutions were carried on under this Act against them; and having lost the sunshine of royal favour, they were without protection, and exposed to all the vexation which the petty malice of their persecutors, clothed with magisterial authority, could inflict.

* Dr. Burnet, in his *Life and Times*, speaking of the mobs occasioned by this trial in London, says, that they destroyed five meeting-houses, so far as burning all the pews in them. He adds, "there happened to be a meeting-house near me, out of which they drew every thing that was in it, and burnt it before the door of the house." Vol. ii. p. 542.

We find that the Baptist church in Paul's-alley, Barbican, Mr. Allen, pastor, made a public collection towards repairing such meeting-houses as were destroyed, or otherwise damaged, by the mob at this time. It is probable that the other rich congregations of Dissenters did the same.

At the conclusion of the war with France, it was much wished at Court that the general body of protestant Dissenting Ministers in London would present an address of congratulation to the Queen; but they could not be prevailed upon to do so. On this occasion the Baptists had an opportunity of giving full proof of the integrity of their principles, and the consistency of their conduct, which entitled them to the confidence and respect of their brethren of the other denominations.

A noble Lord, who had been a particular friend of Mr. Joseph Stennett, probably the Earl of Peterborough, was employed by her Majesty's ministers, in connection with another noble Peer, to induce the London Baptists, in their collective character, as a separate denomination, to approve the measures of the government. Mr. Stennett was sent for by them; these Noblemen thinking, that, if they could gain him over, it would go far towards accomplishing their object. Some things were insinuated by these Peers in their conversation, which tended to produce an alienation of the Baptists from the other denominations; and assurances were made to him, that such a compliance with the expectations of the Court, from him and his brethren, would be very acceptable; would bring them highly into the esteem of the Queen; and secure them any favour they could reasonably expect. Mr. Stennett was not to be taken with the gilded bait; he well knew that liberty was only safe when secured by the proper administration of the laws, and not when it was in any measure made to depend upon caprice and royal favour; and he assured their Lordships, without hesitation, that "neither himself nor his brethren could ever be brought to justify with their hands what their hearts disapproved; and that no particular advantages to them could ever counterbalance their regard for their country."

It is due to the reputation of Dr. Williams to say, that he as steadily resisted the solicitations of Robert Harley, Esq. afterwards Earl of Oxford. This firm and constitutional conduct was so gratifying to the Whig Lords, that they deputed a noble

Earl to make their suitable acknowledgments for this seasonable stand of the Dissenters.

It is not improbable that this refusal of the Dissenters might urge forward the measures which had long been in contemplation, to take away from them the benefits which they had thought were secured to them by the Act of Toleration. The bill to prevent "occasional conformity," (a practice with which some Dissenters, to the disgrace of their principles and the dishonour of Christianity, had been in the habit of complying, for the purpose of being admitted to places under the government,) was now contrived for the purpose of either driving them into the church, or out of the state; nor could those Dissenters justly complain of a measure which their inconsistencies had procured.*

The Baptists were not at all affected by the enactments of the "Occasional Bill." Their ministers had steadily opposed and condemned the practice of profaning the Lord's Supper, by taking it as a qualification for a civil office; and their members had either filled offices without such conformity, or been satisfied without posts of honour and employment

* The "Occasional Bill" provided, "That any person holding any office, civil or military, or holding any office under the crown, who should, after being admitted to such office, knowing or willingly resort to, or be present at, any Conventicle, for the exercise of religion, in other manner than according to the Liturgy and practice of the Church of England, when there should be ten persons or more assembling together, over and above those of the same household, although the Liturgy should be there used, or when her Majesty should not be prayed for in express words, according to the Liturgy of the Church of England, should forfeit forty pounds, &c.; and to be disabled thenceforth to hold any such office, &c.; except upon conforming to the Church of England, and for the space of one year not being present at any Conventicle, and during that time receiving the sacrament at least three times, according to the rites of the Church of England; then to be capable of being again appointed to such offices, &c. The conviction to be upon the oath of two witnesses, before a justice of the peace."

under the government. The blow was aimed principally at the Presbyterians, many of whom, being persons of wealth and consideration in the country, had filled offices of magistracy, &c. and it should seem were generally in the practice of occasionally communicating with the Church of England; at least, whenever their nonconformity appeared to lie in their way to worldly honour and distinction.

The Presbyterian Ministers were by this measure plunged into very great difficulties. They were now obliged either to part with their members of this description, or to exhort them rather to give up civil offices than leave their churches and ministry. I have before me a sermon preached at the Merchants' Lecture, at Salters' Hall, January 22, 1711—12, by Dr. Williams, entitled "An Enquiry into the present Duty of Protestant Dissenters."* The text was Mark x. 29, 30; "*And Jesus answered and said, verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or brother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.*"

The worthy Doctor had already preached three sermons from this text. In the fourth which he published, is discussed his fourth inference, viz. "It is true wisdom to be well and rightly instructed in what concerns the honour and interest of the Lord Jesus in our DAY and PLACE, and to be always ready to quit and lose all for the sake thereof." The preacher then lays down seven propositions as preliminaries. These are discussed with great ability; but one is ready to be astonished that such a chain of logical principles should have been thought necessary to convince Christians that it was their duty to obey God

* London, printed by J. H. for J. Laurance, at the Angel, in the Poultry, and Daniel Jackson, at the Bible and Three Crowns, Cheapside. Second Edition, 1712, price 4*d.*

rather than man! Had they believed what the Saviour has said, "*No man can serve two masters; ye cannot serve God and mammon;*" all the preacher's logic might have been spared, and all the perplexity of those worldly gentlemen prevented.

At length, after abundance of ratiocination, the Doctor comes boldly "to a question now" (says he) "depending, and of great consequence to Dissenting Protestants, viz. *Whether the members of protestant Dissenting churches lawfully may altogether statedly desert our public assemblies for worship, as a qualification to hold their present offices.*" He states the question first *negatively*. It is not, 1. "Whether Dissenters may have *occasional* communion with the Established Church; this I grant, *though it is more doubtful than heretofore:** nor, 2. Whether Dissenters may do much service in offices of trust, and should not, without just reasons, quit the capacity for usefulness; this I affirm, and wish all offices were filled by men best qualified, of whatever denomination.†"

The Doctor then states *affirmatively*, that he is "fully persuaded it is the will of Christ they should quit their offices, and adhere to our public assemblies where they have opportunity."

He finds no difficulty in proving this assertion. Indeed who could resist such an argument as the following? "When Darius issued a decree, that whoever shall ask any petition, of any God or man, save of himself, should be cast into the den of Lions, Daniel did not shut his *windows*, nor alter his *custom*,

* The Baptists of that period seem never to have thought this a *doubtful matter*, whether persons professing godliness among the protestant Dissenters should take the sacrament as a religious test. The reader is referred to the memoir of Mordecai Abbot, Esq. in the account of Pinner's Hall church, as a proof of this remark.

† It is an essential qualification to any man who would fill an *office* under government, that he be *conscientious;* but how can a man be *conscientious* who can deliberately prostitute the ordinance of the Lord's Supper?

but thought it a matter of conscience, to venture office and life too, rather than let his enemies want evidence that no *decree* should restrain him from daily praying to his God, Dan. vi. 7—10." p. 25.

The Doctor seems to have been perfectly aware that some of his hearers were likely to "shut their windows, and alter their custom," though no "den of lions" was threatened. The greatest danger to which they were exposed was the loss of the golden chain, which they had long worn as a mark of their worldly distinction. He therefore concludes his sermon by answering some objections, which, it is probable, he had heard made by some of his rich friends.

"*Objection.*—If we resign our office, we lose an opportunity for service.

"*Solution.*—1. God may fill up your places another way. 2. However, God requires no service from you, nor will accept, nor usually succeed it, when undertaken on sinful terms; and he forbids you *to do evil, that good may come of it.* 3. I appeal to every unbiassed awakened conscience, whether you are obliged to continue the little service you can perform in your office, when it must be by renouncing your profession, deserting those who are subserving the interest of Christ, violating the gospel rule, (whereby church members are to assemble together with the church *in one place,*) approving what's destructive to the communion of saints, condemning all those who suffered for the Dissenting cause and assemblies, giving an occasion of offence to many, and disregarding the voice of the present surprizing providence, which may intend your safety and benefit. I am persuaded no man's service among us can be justified against the force of these reasons.

"*Objection.*—We came into our office by a special providence.

"*Solution.*—That was not to continue it upon these terms, but to shew your fidelity to Christ by laying it down. This un-

godly age reckons all religion to be a trick or mere fancy, and all pretenders to it to be designing, and so selfish, that they will suffer nor lose nothing for it. It concerns all pious men not to confirm any in these atheistical notions; God often confuted them by his people voluntarily choosing to suffer, rather than desert his cause, and violate their consciences. Such an occasion has this signal providence set before you; the Lord grant you may not abuse it by unfaithfulness.

"I have delivered my own soul: and since it was necessary that some or other of us should guard our people against the present temptation, I was the willinger to undertake it, because it is known, that my subsistence is no way concerned in any men's forsaking or abiding with us; and therefore I can have no regard to any secular interest, when I declare my judgment."

This bill, which had been twice before rejected in the House of Lords, though it had in both instances passed the Commons, now passed the three branches of the legislature without any opposition; for, being tacked to a money bill, the Queen made no objection to sign it. This was at the end of the year 1711. Bishop Burnet says, "Some of the Dissenters complained much, that they were thus forsaken by their friends to whom they had trusted; and the Court had agents among them, to inflame their resentments, since they were sacrificed by those on whom they depended. All the excuse that the Whigs made in their easiness in this matter, was, that they gave way to it, to try how far the yielding might go towards quieting the fears of those, who seemed to think the church was still in danger till that act passed; and thereby to engage these to concur with them in those important matters that might come before them." *

In one of the former debates, in 1703, Bishop Burnet took a prominent part in opposing its passing. He considered the

* Life and Times, vol. ii. p. 585, 586.

measure as "designed to make a breach on the Toleration." He adds, "and I was resolved never to be silent, when that should be brought into debate; for I have long looked upon liberty of conscience as one of the rights of human nature antecedent to society, which no man could give up, because it was not in his power; and our Saviour's rule, of doing as we would be done by, seemed to be a very express decision to all men, who would lay the matter home to their own conscience, and judge as they would willingly be judged by others." *

I have not ascertained how the Presbyterian Dissenters acted upon this occasion. It is hoped they refused to leave their own places of worship, and that a regard to their principles as Dissenters, their affection for their ministers, and a sacred adherence to Christ as the only head of his church, so powerfully operated, that they *chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt.*

That no opportunity might be lost for crushing the protestant Dissenters, who had rendered themselves obnoxious to the men now at the helm, by their steady attachment to the protestant succession in the house of Hanover, they brought a bill into the House of Commons, May 12, 1714, entitled, "An Act to prevent the growth of schism, &c. and for the further security of the Churches of England and Ireland as by law established." This bill struck at the rights of conscience, and was the most grievous measure, probably, that could have been devised. It was designed to be followed up by another, viz. "to prevent all protestant Dissenters from voting at elections, or from sitting in parliament." The direct and avowed object of the Schism Bill was to prevent the Dissenters from keeping up the succession of their learned ministers, by giving the

* Life and Times, vol. ii. p. 364.

established and endowed sect an absolute control over the education of children, and by preventing students for the ministry among them from obtaining learning in England; all persons who kept a school being required to conform to the Church of England, and to obtain a certificate from the clergyman of the parish, that they had taken the sacrament; the neglect of which subjected them to fines and imprisonment, if they dared to teach little children the alphabet, without such qualification! The catechism of the church of England was the only one to be tolerated; and the Baptists especially were to have the mortification to know, that their lisping babes were taught to say, "In my baptism I was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." *

From the history of the debate in the House of Commons on the third reading of the Schism Bill, as given by Mr. Tindal, we learn that some of the members were very zealous on behalf of the Dissenters, representing it in general, "That it looked more like a decree of Julian the apostate, than a law enacted by a protestant Parliament; since it tended to raise as great a persecution against our protestant brethren, as either the primitive Christians suffered from the heathen emperors, or the protestants from the inquisition." Its ill consequences were pointed out, "as it would of course encourage foreign education, which, on the one hand, would drain the kingdom of great sums of money, and, on the other, which was still worse, would fill the tender minds of young men with prejudices against their country," &c. On the other side it was main-

* It is said in the Life of Dr. John Gill, that the master of the school at Kettering, to which he went in 1709, required that all his boys should learn the Church catechism. John was at this time eleven years of age; and as neither himself nor his parents could thus violate their consciences, he was obliged to leave school at a time when he was making a rapid improvement in the languages, and when too he could not procure any other teacher.

tained, "that the Dissenters were equally dangerous to the church and state." It does not, however, appear that any proof was produced for this assertion. The Bill was carried May 22, 1714, by a majority of 237 against 126.

In the House of Lords it was opposed strongly. Lord Cowper said, "That instead of preventing schism, and enlarging the pale of the church, this Bill tended to introduce ignorance, and its inseparable attendants, superstition and irreligion." In proof of this he said, "that, in many country towns, reading, writing, and grammar schools were chiefly supported by the Dissenters; not only for the instruction and benefit of their own children, but likewise of those of poor churchmen; so that the suppressing of those schools would in some places suppress the reading the Holy Scriptures." The Earl of Wharton "wondered that noble Lords, who had been educated at Dissenting academies, and whose tutors he could name, were now so forward in suppressing them." He reminded the bishops, who chose to be silent in the debate, of "a law that had not been yet recited—the law of the gospel;—*to do unto others as we would be done unto.*" The Earl of Nottingham said, "He had observed, both from history and from his own experience, that all the persecutions that had been raised in England against schismatics, originally proceeded from, and tended to produce, popery." He particularly excepted against that part of the Bill which enacted, "That any person who should keep any public or private school, or instruct any youth as tutor, should have a licence from the respective Archbishop or Bishop of the place," &c. "My Lords," he added, "I have many children, and I know not whether God Almighty will vouchsafe to let me live to give them the education I could wish they had; therefore, my Lords, I own I tremble when I think, that a certain divine, who is hardly suspected of being a Christian, (meaning Dr. Swift,) is in a fair way of being a bishop, and may one day give licences to those who shall be entrusted with the education of youth."

The Dissenters petitioned that they might be heard by their counsel against the Bill; but their petition was rejected by a majority of 72 against 66. Two days after, in a Committee of the whole House, the Bishop of London having suggested, "that the Dissenters had made this bill necessary by their endeavours to propagate their schism, and to draw the children of churchmen to their schools and academies;" Lord Halifax replied, "That what they did was with the knowledge and consent of their parents, who, in many places, had not sufficient means to educate their own children." He then moved, "that they might be allowed schools *to teach their own children*." The debate lasted three hours, but the motion was negatived by 62 votes to 48. It was then moved, that "they might at least be suffered to have *school-mistresses* to teach their children to read;" which, after half an hour's debate, was carried without dividing. A clause was afterwards proposed and carried "to exempt from the penalties of this Act any tutor, who should be employed by any Noblemen or Noblewomen to teach in their families, provided such person did in every respect qualify himself according to this Act, except only in that of taking out a licence from the Bishop." This was carried by a majority of one only. The Bill was then carried by a majority of 177 against 72. The Bill, thus amended by the Lords, was sent down to the Commons, when Mr. Lechmere and Mr. Walpole represented, "That since the protestant Dissenters of Ireland were made liable to the penalties of this Bill, it were but just either to insert a clause in it, or to bring in another Bill to make them enjoy the benefit of the Toleration Act." But Sir William Wyndham and Mr. Campier said, "If leave were given to bring in such a Bill, they hoped they should have leave also to bring in another to incapacitate Dissenters from voting in elections for parliament-men." Some members were for proposing that the clause which related to Noblemen having private tutors might extend to members of the House of Commons also; but others, being afraid any debate might occasion

the loss of the Bill, urged the matter forward, and the Bill was carried by a majority of 168, against 98.

A very spirited protest was signed by six Dukes, one Marquis, ten Earls, two Viscounts, seven Lords, and five Bishops. The fourth article of this protest was, "This must be the more grievous to the Dissenters, because it was little expected from the members of the Established Church, after so favourable an indulgence from the Act of Toleration, and the repeated declarations and professions from the throne and former parliaments against all persecutions, which is the peculiar badge of the Roman church, which avows and practises this doctrine: and yet this has not been retaliated even upon the Papists; for all the laws made against them, have been the effects and just punishments of treasons from time to time committed against the state. But it is not pretended, that this Bill is designed as the punishment of any crime which the protestant Dissenters have been guilty of against the civil government, or that they are disaffected to the protestant succession, as by law established; for in this their zeal is conspicuous."*

This Act enjoined, "That no person in Great Britain, or Wales, shall keep any public or private school, or seminary, or teach or instruct youth, as tutor or schoolmaster, that has not first subscribed the declaration to conform to the Church of England, and has not obtained licence from the respective

* As an illustration of this statement, one instance out of many might be produced of the zeal the protestant Dissenters manifested for the protestant succession. It is taken from the Thanksgiving Sermon preached by the Rev. Joseph Burroughs, of Barbican, at the meeting in Little Wild-street, Nov. 5, 1712. After enumerating various benefits which had resulted from the reign of King William the Third, he says, "*Our liberties are more secured by law than before;* and *likewise the protestant religion is more effectually established by* SETTLING THE SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN ON THE ILLUSTRIOUS HOUSE OF HANOVER."—*A Thanksgiving Sermon, &c.* 1713. p. 30.

diocesan, or ordinary of the place; that upon failure of so doing, he may be committed to prison without bail or mainprize; and that no such licence shall be granted before the party produces a certificate of his having received the sacrament according to the communion of the Church of England, in some parish church, within a year before obtaining such licence, and hath subscribed the oaths of allegiance and supremacy.

"That if any person, having complied with these points, shall, knowingly or willingly, resort to any Conventicle, or be present in any assembly where the Queen is not prayed for, he shall be liable to the penalty of this Act, and from thenceforth be incapacitated to keep any school, or seminary, or instruct any youth as tutor or schoolmaster. And if any person teaches any other catechism than what is set forth in the Common Prayer, his licence shall be thenceforth void, and he be liable to the penalties of the Act; but no person shall be punished twice for the same fact. Any person convicted by this Act, conforming to the Church for one year, without having been present at any Conventicle, shall be again capacitated. This Act to be construed to extend to Ireland." The penalty attached to the breach of this Act was, "to be committed to the common gaol of the county, &c. where the offence is committed; there to continue without bail, &c. for the space of three months."

The Dissenters had now but one resource, which was, to prevail, if possible, upon the Queen not to suffer the bill to pass into a law, by refusing the royal assent. They accordingly resolved to present a firm yet temperate memorial to her Majesty. This was printed, and circulated in an octavo pamphlet of 39 pages.* It is entitled "To THE QUEEN. The humble

* This was printed in London for A. Bell, at the Cross Keys and Bible, in Cornhill, 1714. As the writer has never seen or heard of another copy of this memorial than that in his possession, he has been induced to re-

Supplication of certain of her Majesty's faithful and peaceable Subjects, called Protestant Dissenters, in the name of themselves and the whole Body of the said *Protestant Dissenters* in England, in relation to the *Bill to prevent Schism.*"

There is good reason to think that this measure emanated from the general body of Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations in London, assisted by the respectable laymen of their respective congregations. There must have been, too, a correspondence with the country churches, to warrant the statement that it "was in the name of the whole body."

To the Queen.

"May it please your Majesty,

"We, your Majesty's faithful and peaceable subjects, the *protestant Dissenters* in England, being *fully satisfied* with the establishment of that blessed *toleration* which we now enjoy, granted to us as the consequence of the late happy *Revolution*, and by the just and exact compliance of the nation with the Declaration exhibited by the late Prince of Orange; which *toleration*, after his Highness's landing in England, was presented to the Parliament, and by them turned into a law, in the first year of the reign of the said Prince; when, by the general consent of this nation, he that was first our glorious Deliverer, was afterwards declared our most gracious Lord and Sovereign. And being *fully satisfied* in our minds, and quieted with respect to our frequent apprehensions concerning the continuance and preservation of the said *toleration*, by your Majesty's frequent and gracious assurances, as well from the throne as upon other

print the whole, as a literal copy of a pamphlet too valuable to be lost. He begs his readers to recollect, that the Bill brought into Parliament last year, by Henry Brougham, Esq. was the counter part of the Schism Bill, until the clause respecting taking the Lord's Supper was withdrawn. It is hoped that the obnoxious measure will not be again introduced.

occasions, of granting us your royal protection, *upon our peaceable and dutiful behaviour*, and of your being resolved to preserve the said *toleration* INVIOLABLE: and being nevertheless justly alarmed with the accounts we receive, from all hands, of the implacable hatred which our enemies profess, and of their resolutions, if possible, to deprive us of the benefit of the said *toleration*; (which, however, without your Majesty's concurrence, we know, to our great comfort, they have not power to accomplish;) do therefore with all humility cast ourselves at your Majesty's feet, and flying to your Majesty's known justice, and your tender care for the *peace* and *prosperity*, *ease* and *quiet* of all your peaceable subjects, present this our humble Supplication to your Majesty, most earnestly beseeching your Majesty to take our case into your royal consideration.

"We, *first*, humbly represent to your Majesty, That however we have been slandered, and injuriously charged as persons of irreligious principles, schismatical, and fanatical; which words of reproach have been unjustly cast upon us by our enemies, and often unanswerably refuted; that yet we are a body of your Majesty's subjects, who claim the titles of *Christians* and *Protestants*, and as such humbly also hope for a share in your Majesty's known zeal for propagating and protecting the true *Christian* and reformed *Protestant Religion* in all your dominions; and also a share in that profession which your Majesty so publicly made at your accession to the crown, of your sincere concern for the good of all your subjects, without distinction. We humbly represent to your Majesty, that we are also Christians of the same orthodox faith, and of the same universal Catholic Church of God, of which your Majesty has always professed yourself a member, and of which the Church of England, established by the laws of this land, is declared to be a branch; that we are the same with the said Church of England in all doctrinal articles, and in every principle essential to the life of a *Christian*, and necessary to *salvation*; having signed and sub-

scribed to every one of the doctrinal articles of the Confession of Faith of the said Church of England, and to all the other articles of the said Church, except two only; which two being allowed and acknowledged, even by the Church herself, and by the laws of this land, not to be essential to salvation, or that the declining the same amounts to any breaking off from the unity of the faith, by which Christians are incorporated into Christ, the Head of the universal Catholic Church, or from that love, unity, and charity of Christians, by which all the members of that great Body are united to one another: we, the said Dissenters, have therefore been declared to be no schismatics, as we are maliciously represented to your Majesty to be by our enemies.*

"We farther humbly represent to your Majesty, That being conscientiously scrupulous of conformity to some particular rites and ceremonies established in the Church of England, and which, however acknowledged to be indifferent in themselves, are imposed upon us as terms of communion; and not being able, without sinning against our consciences, to grant the power of the Church, or of the Civil Authority, to make those indifferent things necessary; as also being not able in all things to agree to the *Episcopal Government* of the said Church, as it is established by law in your Majesty's dominions: for these reasons, *we have been obliged*, in mere obedience *to the sovereignty of conscience, being commanded to obey God rather than man, and being assured from God's word, that whatsoever is not of faith is sin*, to *dissent* and *separate* ourselves in communion, though not in charity or in *doctrine*, from the said Established Church;

* The Act of Toleration excused Dissenting Ministers from subscribing the 34th, 35th, 36th, and the first sentence of the 20th article (which is not found in King Edward's articles; but was added, no one knows *when*, or *how*, in the time of Elizabeth.) The Baptist Ministers were excused also from subscribing the "part of the 27th article teaching infant baptism."

being in nothing enemies to the said Church, or to its present settlement, much less dangerous on any account whatsoever; but in all things quietly submitting to the laws of the land, to your Majesty's just authority, and even to those powers granted to the said Church of England as are not necessary to its preservation; not only freely and constantly paying all tithes, duties, and dues, which by the law are demanded of us for the support of the Clergy, Universities, *Schools*, and Edifices of the said Church, but in all places and on all occasions, freely and voluntarily contributing to all such collections, charities, free gifts, subscriptions, and payments whatsoever, as are found wanting for the support and relief of lectures, public sermons, charity schools, decayed or defaced churches, and all such acts of benevolence as are, either by your Majesty's briefs, or the recommendations of the Clergy and members of the Church, offered to us, without any distinction; and without objecting, that it is for the support of that Church which we do not conform to, or communicate with, and which too often, and on many occasions, professedly denies to us the same benevolence. And we cannot but with all humility insist in our claim of being received among the rest of your Majesty's subjects professing the same Christian religion with us, and of being acknowledged as true and orthodox *Christians* by them, and by your Majesty, *because*, to our great *comfort*, we have been, as of right we ought to be, frequently declared to be such, as well by your Majesty, and your glorious predecessors, as also by and with the united concurrence of the Lords Spiritual as well as Temporal, and Commons of the Realm, assembled in Parliament, who have solemnly pronounced and enacted, That we, the Dissenters aforesaid, are no Schismatics; and more especially, because in the late happy conjunction of your Majesty's kingdoms of England and Scotland, and in the exemplification and ratification thereof in Parliament, commonly called *The Act of the Union* of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, whose Discipline, Worship,

and Government is the same (*mutatis mutandis*) with what we profess, acknowledged to be a part of the true *Protestant* Religion, and the same is settled, confirmed, and established as the said true Protestant Religion, by the said Act of *Union*, and by the Parliament of England, of which your Majesty is the head, and of which the Lords Spiritual are so considerable a branch, and to which your Majesty has signified your agreement, by your Royal Assent to the said Act of *Union*, the Bishops of the Church of England representing the said Church of England in the same Parliament, and to the same Act concurring and assenting: the title of which clause is this, 'For *securing* THE TRUE PROTESTANT RELIGION, AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT.' And we humbly hope and believe, that in a kingdom where the Church Government which we acknowledge is one part allowed, and likewise the doctrine and Church Government of that people is granted to be *the true Protestant Religion*, it shall never be supposed, that the same doctrine and government professed by us in another part of your Majesty's dominions, shall be deemed *schismatical* and *irreligious*. Having by these humble representations made room for our application to, and claim of, an equal share of your Majesty's favour and protection; and in hopes that while we continue loyal to, and *quiet* and *peaceable* under your Majesty's Government, we shall enjoy our part of the common blessings of your reign; we with all humility beg leave to represent to your Majesty a true state of our case, as to our dutiful and quiet behaviour to your Majesty. And as to that malicious and unjust charge of which our enemies make so great advantage against us, viz. of our being disaffected to your Majesty's person and government, and dangerous to the Church of England, both which are the pretences at present made use of to expose us to the resentment of the Government, and, if possible, to dispossess us of your Majesty's favour, and of the liberty of our religion which we enjoy, as well by the law as by the happy continuance of your Majesty's protection.

"We humbly represent to your Majesty, that the breaches and divisions which are so increased at this time among your Majesty's subjects, of which your Majesty has so frequently complained from the throne, and for remedy whereof your Majesty has so much and so often recommended *moderation, union,* and *peace* among all your subjects, have been all along our affliction, and a sad presage to us of the general distractions of your subjects, in which our dangers are always justly to be apprehended. It is our happiness in some measure, in those things, that the present divisions, either in their rise or continuance, have not any concern with us, or with any thing relating to us, or in which we have any real concern *as Dissenters.* Our safety and quiet is always best founded in the general tranquillity of all your Majesty's subjects. Seeing,—as we have too often found by sad experience, every party in this nation, as they have striven to prevail against the other, have in their turn given us up, and made their advantages as occasion has offered them at our expence; and that our safety has consisted hitherto, next to the wonderful providence of God, not in our adhering to this or that party, but in your Majesty's steady and religious observance of that sacred promise often repeated from the throne, of preserving inviolably to us our religious liberties, upon which goodness of your Majesty, our present circumstances more especially guide us to depend;—seeing it is evident, that not our enemies only but even those who have professed a great concern for our preservation appear perfectly unconcerned in our danger, and are ready to join, upon any occasion, in our oppression; if, in those divisions aforesaid, some may have misrepresented us to your Majesty, as having abetted and assisted those who have appeared in opposition to your Majesty's late or present measures of government; we most humbly beseech your Majesty to give ear to no such persons, to the prejudice of the Dissenters in general, forasmuch as that although *some* among us, or who call themselves Dissenters, may *foolishly, precipitantly,* and *without our approbation,* have engaged either

with persons or parties in matters *of state*, yet the main body of us, your Majesty's Dissenting subjects, spread into every corner of your dominions, are a quiet, peaceable, and inoffensive people, studying to do our own business, and perfectly ignorant of, and unconcerned in the strife of parties, or the breaches of the public peace, except to lament them as disasters to the nation, and to deprecate the evil consequences of them to your Majesty's best and most faithful people of all persuasions; endeavouring, in all cases, to do our duty to God and your Majesty as becomes Christians and faithful subjects; and desiring no more, than to live quiet and peaceable lives under your Majesty, whom God and the laws have made our rightful Queen and Sovereign, in all godliness and honesty.

"If any shall suggest to your Majesty, that we are attached to the interest of the *Protestant Succession*, and have imbibed new principles of liberty, the first leading to be meddling in, and jealous of the affairs of state, and of your Majesty's administration; and the other making us uneasy with the legal administration of your Majesty s just authority: we humbly crave leave to clear ourselves of both these hateful accusations, and to represent to your Majesty how greatly we are injured by such calumnies, and in what manner, and to what ends and purposes, we are misrepresented to your Majesty on those accounts. We are fully satisfied by the provision made in the constitution of this kingdom, at the time of the late blessed and glorious Revolution, viz. the Act of Settlement of the Crown, (of William and Mary, cap. 1,) and in the several laws subsequent thereunto, to which your Majesty and your Royal Predecessors have given the Royal Assent; and more particularly that the Settlement of the Succession of these Crowns, after your Majesty, *whom we pray God to preserve*, is, by the voice of the nation, established in the illustrious Princes of the House of Hanover, viz. the Princess Sophia, and the heirs of her body, remainder to their heirs in lineal descent, *being Protestants*. We believe it

to be the expectation of all your Majesty's kingdom, that this succession should, in its due time, take place; and we cannot doubt but it has ever been agreeable to the designs and resolutions of your Majesty, that all your subjects should thus believe; and for any one to suggest, that by our being zealously attached to the said *Protestant Succession*, we should necessarily be made jealous of your Majesty's Administration, is an inimitable affront to, and horrid assault upon the honour of your Majesty, and the justice of your Majesty's Administration, in an undutiful and disloyal manner suggesting that your Majesty would be offended, that your people should adhere to that *Protestant Succession* which you had so constantly declared for; and for the security whereof so many necessary and wholesome laws had received the sanction of your Royal Assent; and we cannot be persuaded, but that when we shew our abhorrence of every attempt to weaken the securities of the said Protestant *Hanover Succession*, we discharge our duty, not to our country and posterity only, but to your Majesty, in the best manner possible, and in the manner above all other most pleasing and agreeable to your Majesty, as it is exactly suited to what those laws require, which your Majesty, as aforesaid, has passed, and particularly to that Act of *Union* aforesaid, which your Majesty has declared was esteemed by yourself *as the greatest glory and felicity of your reign*; and which we have great reason to believe your Majesty esteemed so, principally because it tended so much to the quieting the minds of your subjects in both kingdoms, and reconciled all the dangerous disputes which seemed to be in view at that time among your people, about the said *Protestant Succession*; which Protestant Succession is, by that very Act, rendered immortal, unalterable, and no more to be brought into dispute among us. And yet may it please your Majesty, we humbly hope, that as our adhering to the same Protestant Succession has been with all deference and duty to your Majesty, who is the only rightful and lawful possessor of the crown, and whose mild, gentle,

and merciful government, is the great present felicity of your subjects; so we humbly conceive it is highly consistent with our said duty to your Majesty, and is by the laws made a part of our said duty, that we should, with the same fidelity that we serve your Majesty, preserve our loyalty and affection for those whom your Majesty has declared the apparent heirs of the crown, and to whom, by your assent, we and our posterity are to be subject. As to the unhappy debates relating to the measures of your Majesty's Administration, or the persons whom your Majesty has, from time to time, entrusted with the Executive Authority of your Government, we humbly assure your Majesty, we desire to have no other concern therein, than to lament that, whether with cause given, or without cause given, the heats and animosities of parties among your people should be carried up to such a height, as to make either your Majesty uneasy in the possession of the crown, or your people uneasy to one another. And we look upon this with more regret, as we think our own share therein very unhappy, seeing that whether any of our Body are drawn in, by evil persons, to concern themselves therein, farther than is their duty, and whether they have done so or not; yet we, who have not the least concern therein, other than as aforesaid, to deprecate the evil consequences thereof to your Majesty and your dominions, are unhappily sufferers in the reproach thereof, which is unjustly cast upon us. Nor is this all; for if, as we fear, your Majesty should be so far moved against us by the *misbehaviour of some few of our Body, who therein we hereby disown,* and *by no means justify or join with,* or by the misrepresentation of our enemies, as to resent, to our loss, the said misbehaviour, it would not only be our unspeakable disaster, but may tend to our ruin and destruction as *Dissenters:* while at the same time, we humbly assure your Majesty, that as we are guilty of nothing that can reasonably move your Majesty to such displeasure, so we cannot suffer that loss without the greatest wrong and injustice done to us, by those who thus ma-

liciously represent us to your Majesty, who endeavour thereby to deprive us of your royal favour and protection: and as, with all humility, we protest our innocence, so we most humbly beseech your Majesty not to entertain any apprehensions of us, the said Dissenters, or of our behaving in any thing disloyally and undutifully to your Majesty, upon any occasion whatsoever; our utmost desire in this world being to see your kingdoms flourish in *peace* and *liberty;* the laws in their free course; justice equally administered; and all your subjects united, easy, and prosperous, under your Majesty's government and protection.

"We humbly acknowledge, that we owe to your Majesty's goodness *several advantages and privileges which the laws have put absolutely in your power* to abridge us of;* the long enjoyment whereof, as it has been a testimony to us, that we have not been always esteemed unworthy of your Majesty's favour, so has it been a singular blessing to us, and has given us great cause to render thanks to God for your Majesty's reign, and for inclining your royal heart to such moderation and forbearance; and has endeared your Majesty to us as subjects, and caused us to pray with the greatest sincerity and affection, for your long and prosperous reign over us; and it is the greater affliction to us to be now abridged of any of those favours which we have so enjoyed under your Majesty's government, because we are not conscious to ourselves of having given the least provocation to your Majesty to be displeased with us as having been wanting in our duty to, or affection for your person or government, in any respect whatsoever. Among the said advantages which we have enjoyed under your Majesty as aforesaid, the liberty of teaching and instructing our children, and educating them as

* Probably alluding to the existence on the Statute Book of the Act against Dissenting Schoolmasters and others of a similar kind, which had not been enforced since 1688.

well in the knowledge of letters, as in the principles of the Christian Religion, and the understanding of their duty, both to God and your Majesty, *is not the least;* as, on the other hand, the liberty of educating those who are set apart for religious services, according to our own way, that a succession of godly Ministers might be preserved to us, and our prosperity after us, *we esteem the greatest.* These privileges, however they are not made a part of the legal toleration, which, as aforesaid, are established to us, and that we have enjoyed the same, as the effect of your Majesty's goodness; yet we humbly represent to your Majesty, that they are things so essential to, and such necessary consequences of the Toleration itself, that we cannot but believe, that we have enjoyed the same with your Majesty's *good pleasure;* and as the consequences of those promises aforesaid, which your Majesty was so often pleased to make, of *preserving the same toleration inviolable.* And may it please your Majesty, we cannot, but with sad hearts, look upon all attempts to deprive us either of a succession of Ministers to assist us in the worship and service of God, or of needful Schools, for the education and instruction of our children, by which alone the same toleration can be made effectual to our posterity, as so many constructive invasions of the said toleration, which we had so much reason to hope should be inviolably preserved; seeing that any toleration of the public worship of God, according to our consciences, must be imperfect which does not allow us to have *Ministers* brought up to officiate in the said worship. And we humbly suggest to your Majesty, that, when we had a toleration allowed for religious assemblies, and a method therein prescribed for the ascertaining the qualifications of our said Ministers, and of the places where they should exercise their functions, it cannot be supposed but that the said Ministers were tacitly, though not explicitly, allowed to qualify themselves by all needful studies, acquirements of learning, knowledge of religion, and the like, for the holy office, for which they were to

be separated and inducted. Likewise we humbly represent to your Majesty, the sad and lamentable case of our families and posterity, if the education of our children be taken from us, and if we are deprived of the advantage of schools for the instruction of our said children in the knowledge of letters, and in the principles of the *Christian Religion;* in which case, as your Majesty is not only the nursing mother of a great and populous nation, but is not a stranger to the affection of *a natural Mother to children of her own body,* we humbly appeal to your Majesty to judge in our behalf what an inexpressible affliction it must be to so many thousand families of your subjects, *who not being able,* from sincere scruples of conscience, and for no wicked factions, or dividing principles, as our enemies falsely suggest, to suffer our *children* to be brought up in the *Church of England,* should be therefore deprived of all opportunities of giving them such learning and such education and instruction as is necessary to fit them for their respective employments, and as may fit them, as aforesaid, for the service of God, your Majesty, and their country.

"We know it is wickedly suggested, that we have the Toleration only as a present exemption from the punishment of the laws then in force, and that it was not the intent and meaning of the said *toleration,* that we should propagate the separation to our posterity; and we find some who have endeavoured, though very weakly, by their writings to persuade us, that it is our duty, although we cannot ourselves conform, yet to breed up our posterity in principles of *conformity to the Church of England.* But, Madam, your Majesty must have very mean thoughts of the sincerity of our principles, and our enemies might, with much more justice than now they can, tax us with hypocrisy, and with being not really conscientious *Dissenters,* if at the same time that professing ourselves not able to conform to the worship and government of the *Church of England,* we, on mere scruples of conscience, separated from her communion; and

yet at the same time could educate our children in that way which we could not join in ourselves.

"If, Madam, we did not believe that it is our indispensable duty to serve and worship God in that way which is in our opinion most agreeable to his revealed will, and if we did not believe that the worship, ceremonies, &c. which we dissent from are not most agreeable to the said will of God, we could not have any justifiable reason for our dissent: but, Madam, while we are persuaded, that the way in which we serve and worship God, without making any reflections, is, as aforesaid, the most agreeable to the word of God, which is his revealed will, and that therefore we think ourselves bound in duty to adhere thereto, your Majesty would most justly condemn us, as being without all sincerity, and mere hypocritical Dissenters; or on the other hand, as being without natural affection to our children, especially without affection to their souls, if we could so far neglect them, as to educate them in such a worship which we did believe was not the most agreeable to God's will; so that, Madam, we humbly represent, that either we must cease to be Dissenters, or cease to be moved with an affectionate concern for the souls of our children, or we must think ourselves bound, both by the laws of God and nature, to instruct them in the *Christian religion* in the same manner, and in the same principles as we ourselves profess it. And we humbly lay the consideration of this case before your Majesty, viz. whether abridging us of the liberty of educating our children, and of instructing them in the same principles of the *Christian religion*, and in the same manner of worship and practice which we believe to be best and most agreeable to the will of God, is not our indispensable duty which we cannot go from, and may not omit, on pain of Gods vengeance, and most righteous judgment, both here and for ever; which, if it be true, as we believe, we cannot on any terms, comply with, without sin, or our enemies impose upon us, without being guilty of ma-

nifest persecution; which according to the declaration of several late Parliaments, is voted to be contrary to the principles of the Christian religion, and to the practice of the Church of England in particular. We humbly crave your Majesty's pardon, if with the greatest deference to your Majesty's known clemency, and that compassionate merciful temper, with which it is known you have always treated your subjects, we lay before your Majesty something of the nature and consequences of such persecuting laws, as either have been in force in this nation, or as may be made or revived by any influence which our enemies may have in time coming, to the prejudice of the Dissenters; and humbly to expostulate, not with your Majesty, but with all those who misrepresent us to your Majesty, in order to bring us under your displeasure, and to destroy the interest we have had in your Majesty's protection. May it please your Majesty; we are far from representing ourselves as a body, either formidable to our enemies, or dangerous to the state on any account. We are many in number indeed, but without the least appearance of a body. We on all occasions covet to be as we really are, under the protection of no human power but that of your Majesty and the laws. Our enemies cannot accuse us of being in any concert one with another, or not so much as what ought to be for maintaining the needful correspondence among ourselves for our conduct of our religious interest. We are not separated from, but are promiscuously scattered among all your Majesty's subjects, and in all parts of your dominions; we have no public leaders, public heads, public stock, or public strength, nor do we ever seek any, but are entirely naked and defenceless; disconcerted, divided from one another, and too much uneasy one with another. The scandal of so much as thinking ourselves powerful, much less of being so in reality, will not lie against us, even our enemies themselves being judges: so that all the suggestions which have been made, *of our being dangerous to the state,* are so evidently malicious, and

without weight, that we are under no apprehensions that your Majesty will or can be imposed upon in that case about us. On the contrary, our enemies find it but too easy, on all occasions, to oppress and invade us; and had not the honour and veracity of your Majesty interposed, your Majesty is witness for us, how often they would, and easily could have finished our ruin, and dissolved the Act of Toleration, which is the foundation of the liberty we enjoy; and we, on the other hand, are witnesses to posterity, how constantly and steadily your Majesty has maintained us in the enjoyment of our religious privileges, and preserved us from the danger of an *unchristian persecution*; which protection we, on all occasions, have expressed our sense of, and thankfulness to your Majesty for, and are not conscious that we have willingly, or as Dissenters, done any thing to forfeit. Nor have our enemies only found it easy to oppress us, and to crush us with limitations and restrictions, such as the laws of toleration have left but too much room for; but even those people who we are reproached with serving, and for adhering to whom, in civil affairs, we have been misrepresented to your Majesty, have, on all occasions, assisted our said enemies to take from us all power of making ourselves considerable in the said civil affairs, by entirely disabling us to appear in public matters, removing us from all the advantages of magistracy in towns, or offices in the courts, whereby we might be capable, by our numbers, to give any weight on one side or on the other; in doing which however, they have, though perhaps against their will, done us this favour, that being so entirely under their foot, with respect to power, the charge of being dangerous either to *Church or State*, can never more be brought against us. All pretences, therefore, of our suggesting the ill consequences of these things as the effect of our strength or number, being thus removed, we, in the humblest manner possible, represent to your Majesty the evil consequences of any laws which shall or

may be made to suppress us, to persecute us, or to abridge us of the just liberty which we enjoy. And, first, we humbly represent, how great a breach such things must necessarily make of that peace and union among all your Majesty's subjects, which was in a great measure compassed by the Toleration; which your Majesty has so earnestly and so often recommended to all your people from the throne; and which, however, by heats and animosities of another nature, and by the warmth and intemperate conduct of men of all sides and parties, is interrupted, yet, blessed be God, there is room to hope, and expect, it might be yet obtained under your Majesty's mild and merciful administration.

"It cannot but be a grief to all your Majesty's good subjects, who wish to see the whole nation united in affection to your Majesty, and in zeal for the public safety, to find that to the present unhappy breaches, which too much agitate the minds of your subjects, and which break in upon the peace of societies, neighbourhoods, and even families, about state affairs, which few rightly understand, should be added, the revived rancour and animosity, which so long and with so many evil effects, distracted this nation, for fifty years before the Revolution, upon differences in religion; all which the charity and forbearance of the *Church of England*, and the satisfaction which the *Dissenters* reaped in an uninterrupted toleration, had happily laid asleep, and which began, on both sides, to be forgotten among us. Your Majesty has had many examples of the follies committed on both sides, in those days, to the uneasiness of the government, and the great disquiet of the nation, from the heat and oppression of the *persecuting penal laws*, immoderately executed on one hand, and from the immoderate zeal of those, who by those unjust pressures, and the various sorts of violence which they suffered, have rather been driven farther off from the Church, than reduced to its obedience on the other hand. We humbly leave it to your Majesty's considera-

tion, and believe that your Majesty's experience cannot but join with us in it, that the persecution of Dissenters in the former reigns, did not only fail in the end proposed, (viz. *of reducing them to a conformity to the Church,*) but, on the contrary, rather increased the numbers of the Dissenters in your dominions; many families of *moderate people*, before of the Church of England, being filled with such aversions to the violences offered to conscience, which they thought unchristian, and with compassion for the sufferings of others, as thereby to believe the sufferers the *best Christians*, and came over to them accordingly. On the other hand, it seems to be out of question, that, saving the benefit of our liberty, which we are thankful to God and your Majesty for, the numbers and interest of the *Dissenters* have been far from increasing, or gaining ground by the said *toleration*. We acknowledge, Madam, that taking away the Schools and Academies of the *Dissenters*, is not an immediate depriving of the toleration, though it abridges us of those appendices of liberty, which we enjoyed as consequences of the *toleration* as aforesaid; and that we are not thereby abridged of educating our youth, and preserving a succession of Ministers, by sending them into foreign parts, and bringing them up in Schools and Universities of other countries. But we humbly represent to your Majesty, that these things cannot but fill us with just apprehensions, that farther hardships may be prepared and designed for us; and that those who can be so unjust to us as to insinuate that we *are dangerous to your Majesty's interest, unworthy of your royal favour or protection, and not to be obliged with such advantages, as by your Majesty's goodness we have enjoyed*, will not fail, as far as possible, upon all occasions, to incense your Majesty against us, and to prepossess your Majesty so far in our prejudice, as to make other and farther hardships and restraints upon us to seem necessary; and, at last, to bring upon us a repeal even of the *toleration* itself, and a return of all the former violences of

persecution, under which we, and our immediate progenitors, have so deeply suffered already. We farther represent to your Majesty, that as it may be true, that we may as aforesaid, send our children for education and instruction to foreign parts, whereby the succession of our Ministers may be preserved; yet that this confirms our apprehensions, as aforesaid, that our enemies will not rest here, but are resolved if possible to push on their designs against us, to our entire ruin, and to the divesting us of the privilege of the *toleration* itself, as aforesaid; since otherwise the easiness of our bringing up young Ministers is secured, and that thereby the end of the present design will be defeated, should be a forcible reason against their proceeding against us in this manner, as being a thing perfectly ineffectual, and not capable of answering what is proposed by it, viz. *of putting an end to what they call the schism.* And yet on the other hand we cannot but represent to your Majesty, that our educating our youth abroad is many ways injurious, not to our families only, but to the public stock of the kingdom, causing great numbers of youth to settle in foreign parts, and never returning at all; to the lessening the numbers of your people; and causing great sums of money to be yearly expended in foreign countries, to the manifest loss of our own. But we humbly lay ourselves at your Majesty's feet, in behalf of the posterity of our poorer brethren, whose families being large, and substance small, are not able to support the expence of foreign education; and who yet being restrained by the same principle of conscience by which they dissent, and not able, with satisfaction, to breed up their children under Church of England tutors and schoolmasters, will be thereby obliged to content themselves with keeping them at home, and bringing them up with that little family-instruction which they are able to give them, to the great scandal of their country, the discouragement of literature, and in consequence thereof, the abounding ignorance, which is the

mother of error and confusion. For these and many other reasons, we humbly supplicate your Majesty to take our case into your royal consideration: we beseech, and with all humility entreat, your Majesty to consider us and our innocent posterity, who are represented as enemies to your Majesty before they are yet born, or before they know their right hand from their left, in the offences which our enemies suggest as the reason of their proceeding against us.

"We humbly plead with your Majesty, that if, as is suggested, some of us may have unwarily failed in their duty, and, in their mistaken zeal for the nation's liberties, may have *fallen in too much with*, and gone too far in the *party disputes*, which now embarrass the public affairs; (which steps of theirs, we, as aforesaid, *utterly dislike*, and daily blame them for;) that yet, on the contrary, the main body of *Dissenters* are your Majesty's faithful subjects, steady in your interest, and depending upon the justice and faithfulness of your Majesty, for the safety and preservation of their liberties, *Protestant* Religion, *Protestant* Succession, and the public good of their country against all the Popish Interests, Princes, and Pretenders in the world. We humbly plead, Madam, that, to the utmost of our power, we have been assistants to bear the burden of long and expensive wars, in defence of the honour and dignity of the crown, and against Popish and French tyranny: we have spent our blood and estates in the service of your Majesty and our country; have fought and paid as far and faithfully, in proportion, as our brethren of the Church; and pardon us, Madam, to say, that we were in hopes our said brethren would not have envied or prevented us in enjoying with them the blessings and comforts of peace: and we cannot but think ourselves unkindly treated by them who envy us our share in the happiness of your Majesty's reign, *which we pray God may be long and prosperous*, on pretence of our being disloyal to your Majesty, and dangerous to your Government, to preserve which, there are so many

among us left fatherless, widows, childless, and maimed, both in families and persons, by the long and faithful services which we have performed in your Majesty's armies and navies. We most humbly supplicate your Majesty, that as we are not conscious of any crime, and that our enemies cannot charge us, as *Dissenters,* with acting any thing contrary or inconsistent with your Majesty's interest, or our duty to your Majesty; so our enemies may not prevail with your Majesty to withdraw your protection or favour from us. We beseech your Majesty, that as our years of peace are to begin at this period, the ruin of our religious liberties may not be dated from the epocha with the enjoyment of our civil liberties; and that our children may not date the persecution they shall suffer, from the very same year of your reign from which the nation dates their *quiet* and *tranquillity*; that we may not mourn when all the rest of your subjects rejoice; and that your Majesty, who we are assured wishes for nothing more than the prosperity of all your people, may not have the disappointment to see a constant series of afflictions entailed upon more than a million of innocent people, your subjects; and their days made miserable by persecution and prosecution for the mere profession of religion, and preserving their consciences free from impositions of human inventions.

"*Lastly,* We humbly entreat your Majesty, to pardon the freedom of this supplication, and of all concerned therein, there being no meaning or design therein, but to obtain from your Majesty, that no Act may obtain your Royal Assent, which may lessen the religious privileges of your faithful subjects, the *Dissenters;* abridge them of the liberties and of the happy quiet of their consciences, in the matters of religion, which they now enjoy; or may restrain them from instructing their children in the fear and knowledge of God, and of their duty to your Majesty; to be deprived whereof, would reduce us to the greatest perplexities and difficulties imaginable.

"God preserve your Majesty's valuable life; and make your reign long and prosperous; grant you peace and victory over all the enemies of your Person and Government; and inspire your Majesty with divine grace that you may exalt religion, honour the King of heaven, establish peace, charity, and a reconciliation of parties among all your people; to the glory of your Majesty's reign, and the lasting comfort of the whole nation, is the united prayer of all your Majesty's *faithful* and *peaceable protestant subjects* throughout your dominions, and in a particular manner of

THE DISSENTERS."

Notwithstanding this "humble supplication," the Queen was so infatuated by the counsels of the high church party, that on the 25th of June, 1714, she ordered that the royal assent should be given to it by commission. "But it is observable," says the continuator of Rapin, who was a clergyman, and who does not express one word of disapprobation of the measure, "the very day (August the first) it was to take place, the Queen departed this life; which accident broke all the measures of those who had promoted that law, and rendered it in a manner ineffectual!"

Bishop Burnet says, that "the parliament which passed this Bill was the worst that he ever knew."* The spirit that was manifested against the Dissenters between June 25th and August 1st, gave full opportunity to the enemies of the Dissenters to shew the manner in which it was to have been rendered effectual; and, but for the "accident," as Mr. Tindal calls it, of the Queen's death, that clergyman would doubtless have been prevented from apparently sighing over such a measure as that of the persecuting Schism Bill being unfortunately broken! The penalty would certainly have been very rigor-

* Burnet's Life and Times, vol. ii. p. 63.

ously executed by those who wished to prevent even the indulgence to Dissenters of school-mistresses for their unoffending babes. The Dissenters were to have no alternative between their children being taught doctrines and practices which they believed to be unscriptural, or their being left to the darkness of mental ignorance. Is it then to be wondered at, that when reduced to such degradation, and when their prospects were rendered so dark and portentous, they should have earnestly prayed that God would mercifully interpose, and work deliverance for them and their children? Who can feel surprise if, when that deliverance was granted them, though probably in a way they did not expect, they should consider it not in the light of an "accident," but of an *answer to prayer*, and should rejoice in the event, even when that event was the death of the Queen? THE FIRST DAY OF AUGUST should be ever recollected as the anniversary of a deliverance, as great, in behalf of protestant Dissenters, as that which the Jews annually commemorated on the days of *Purim*, Esther ix. 28.

The Baptist historian, Crosby, says, respecting this event, "But providence, and its inevitable decrees, took the whole work out of their hands, surprising to all, but terrible as a clap of thunder to the enemies of the protestant succession." Her Majesty expired the *first of August*, a little after seven o'clock, in the 50th year of her age, and the 13th of her reign.

The sentiments and feelings of the Baptists on account of the death of Queen Anne, and of the protestant succession in the house of Hanover, shall be given in the words of Mr. Benjamin Stinton, son-in-law and successor to Mr. Benjamin Keach, in some extracts from a sermon entitled, "A Discourse of Divine Providence; occasioned by the Demise of her late Majesty Queen Anne, and the happy Accession of our present Sovereign King George to the Throne of Great Britain, &c. Second Edition, 1714." The text is Dan. ii. 20, 21. *Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever;*

for wisdom and might are his; and he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. In applying the text to the occasion, this judicious minister remarks, "You cannot but have observed, that the state of affairs in this kingdom has lately received a very great and unexpected turn; and if we look back a little to the posture of affairs a few months since, and compare them with the present state of things, the greatness of this change will be very visible to us. So bad was our condition, that a great prelate (Bishop Burnet) thought it not improper to compare it to the miserable circumstances we were in before the happy revolution in 1668. 'It may not be an improper attempt,' says that great statesman as well as divine, 'to try once to awaken a nation that has perhaps forgot past dangers, and yet may be nearer them than ever. If there is any difference between the present state of things and that we were in about thirty years ago, it is that we are now more naked and defenceless, more insensible and stupid, and much more depraved in all respects than we were then. Many are barefacedly going back to that misery, from which God, by such a mighty hand, rescued us, and has hitherto preserved us with an amazing chain of happy providences.' * Many who refused to take the oaths of allegiance to the late King William, and were therefore suspected of favouring the interest of the Impostor, were advanced to places of great honour and trust. The doctrine of an indefeasible hereditary right was publicly vindicated, both in addresses to her Majesty, and in books dispersed among the people; and the alliance made to secure the protestant succession was in great danger of being broken. Some of the worst parts of popery were revived, and zealously promoted by some of the clergy; and others had the impudence to propose a coalition between the

* Burnet's Life and Times, Introduction to vol. iii.

Gallican and English churches. And the better to carry on these designs, the spirit of envy and persecution was revived among the people; and those encroachments that were made upon the Act of Toleration,* caused some to fear, and others to hope, that in a little time it would be wholly taken away. And the more zealous were hereby encouraged to threaten the Dissenters with demolishing their places of worship, driving their teachers into corners, and banishing out of the land all that dared to dissent from the church.

"So fast did the interests of popery and the Pretender grow in England, and such reason was there to fear their attempts upon us, that the House of Lords thought it necessary to address her Majesty to issue out her proclamation, promising a reward to any that should bring the Pretender to justice, in case he either landed, or attempted to land, in any of her Majesty's dominions. And in an address from the same House soon after, (June 24, 1714,) the dangerous condition we were then in was represented to her Majesty in these words:—'And since the Papists and Non-jurors are so insolent, as not only to support the Pretender's claim to your royal crown by their writings and discourses, but also traiterously to enlist men into his service, and send them to France; we most humbly beseech your Majesty to issue out your proclamation, &c.' And many true patriots of our country, as well in church as state, had the courage to give us warning,† and represent our great danger to us; assuring us that our civil and religious privileges were just expiring, if God, by some special providence, did not

* "It is true," says Bishop Burnet, in his Pastoral Care, (preface), "many of us opposed the Occasional Bill, from which such things were expected. We thought their own ill designs were under it; we thought it ill-timed; we looked upon it as tending to a breach of the Toleration."

† "God be thanked," says Bishop Burnet, p. 71, "there are many among us that stand upon the watch-towers, and that give faithful warning."

save us; * though all that did thus were sure of being publicly discountenanced.

"But now what a happy turn is given to all these things! and how wonderfully does the scene of affairs begin to change! Those from whom we thought ourselves in most danger are either removed or have the power of doing mischief taken from them. The public credit is retrieved; the enemies of the protestant succession dare not shew themselves; the hopes of persecutors are turned into despair; and the once grand supporter of popery and tyranny (Louis XIV.) dares not lift up his hand, or give any countenance openly to the mock king. In a word, *The hearts of the righteous are made glad; but the wicked are filled with fear and sorrow.*"

Mr. Stinton refrains from "casting any unjust reflections upon the memory of the late Queen," who, he says, "reigned very gloriously over the British nation for many years." He adds, "The glories of her reign might have shined with the same brightness or greater to the end than at the beginning, had they not been eclipsed by the evil counsel of Ahitophel, (Bolingbroke,) and the base designs which some were carrying on, under a pretended zeal for the church, and concern for the prerogative of the crown. And had God, as our iniquities deserved, suffered them to go on a little further, and given time for their conceived mischief to have brought forth, what a dreadful scene should we now have had before us! Our civil and religious privileges taken away; our goods and estates confiscated; our posterity left to inherit nothing but popery and slavery; and a civil but bloody war must have commenced in the nation!

"But God, who has often raised us, by his kind Providence, interposed yet once more in our favour; and upon the demise

* Burnet's Spital Sermon, published by order of the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen.

of her Majesty, (who herself began to make some change,) all their counsels are turned into foolishness, and their deep-laid schemes overthrown. The protestant succession immediately takes place; the regency is put into the hands of wise and faithful ministers; and his excellent Majesty King GEORGE is proclaimed throughout the whole kingdom, with the greatest joy and satisfaction. The hopes of the Pretender are entirely cut off; no foreign power daring yet to give him assistance; and all Europe are waiting to see what great effects will follow such an unexpected change."

The following description of Queen Anne, by Crosby, appears so candid and just, that I with pleasure transcribe it:—"Thus died this great and excellent Princess, who, though she may have been misled into some prejudices and mistakes, in the latter part of her reign, yet, I think, could not herself have any share in the counsels which were then on foot against the protestant succession."

As to the internal state of our churches at this period, some tolerable judgment may be formed from the following extracts from two circular letters of the Western Association; the first written in June, 1714, and the other in July, 1715, by which time the Rebellion had broken out in the kingdom, to attempt the overthrow of the protestant succession, in the illustrious House of Hanover.

The predictions of their faithful watchmen, just before the close of the former reign, appeared to be now fulfilling; and God, whom they had so wearied with their abominations, appeared to be about to take his fan in his hand, and thoroughly to purge his floor. But He, who passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage, because he delighteth in mercy, was pleased again to stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind, and in the midst of his deserved wrath to manifest undeserved mercy.

The Association which met at Trowbridge the 19th and 20th

of the third month, 1714, sent a Circular Letter to the churches, from which the following are extracts. — "None of the churches," say they, "are without cause of sorrow and mourning, on account of the great decay of the life and power of religion amongst professors, and of a carnal worldly spirit taking place, which may justly humble us all before the Lord, for our loss of first love; and fill our minds with an awful fear, lest the holy and jealous God should for these things manifest his wrath and full displeasure against his churches, by suffering our enemies to break down the fences of our religious and civil liberties, and to remove his candlesticks out of their places, and suffer the enemies of the Lord Jesus to prevail.

"Therefore we do most earnestly entreat you to join your united cries and prayers with us to the throne of grace, that God would pour down of his Holy Spirit upon his people abundantly, revive his work on their souls, strengthen our languishing graces, heal our backslidings, recover us out of that lukewarm, carnal, and worldly spirit, that is so highly displeasing to our dear Lord, disappoint all the malicious designs of our enemies, preserve the nation from popery and tyranny, bless her Majesty, direct and overrule the Parliament, and avert the judgments which our abuse of mercy calls for, and which seem to be near approaching upon this nation, and are likely to begin at the house of God. We do not mention these things to fill you with groundless fears and jealousies, but to awaken you to your duties; for without wilfully shutting our eyes, we cannot but apprehend the cloud arising, the storm gathering, the heavens darkening over us, and our God withdrawing those influences of his Holy Spirit, that some time past we and others of his people enjoyed. And therefore we persuade ourselves that all the churches in association will most readily join with us in a day of solemn fasting and prayer, and in private as well as public, implore their utmost interest at the throne of grace, daily, for the continuance of the divine blessing and favour, and bless the gospel with great success."

In the letter of July 1715 above referred to, these excellent and pious Ministers say, "We beseech you to consider what a sad return of gratitude it will be to our good and gracious God for the many and great salvations he hath so wonderfully wrought out for us, to lose our first love, and to decay in the practice of piety; to grow carnal, worldly, and lukewarm, under the signal and distinguishing favours of the Lord. You may remember what surprising apprehensions we had of the designs of our and the nation's enemies, against our civil and religious privileges about twelve months since, and you cannot forget how the Lord did appear for us in time of distress and fear; and by a marvellous providence had disappointed our enemies, outdone our faith, and prevented our fears! And we must acknowledge that we are a people served by the arm of the Lord alone; and our enemies saw the finger of God, and sat still as a people astonished at what God had done, though now like Pharaoh they are enraged, and seem resolved to retrieve what they have lost. But though Pharaoh and his host are dead, there are Amalek, Moab, Ammon and Mount Sier, yet to be resisted. The present rage the enemies of our holy profession discover, the malice and envy they shew, put us in mind we are not so safe, but if we provoke God by our unholy walking, he may bring us again into such circumstances that we may see we have need of the help of our God again," &c.

They also agreed at this Association to recommend a day of solemn prayer and thanksgiving to all the Western Churches: the following is the resolution, viz. "Upon the request of divers Churches, being truly sensible with us of the great salvation and deliverance God hath wrought for these nations, and for his people in them; and the rage of our enemies under their disappointments; we readily concur with them, and doubt not you will agree with us that a solemn day of prayer and thanksgiving be observed by all the churches in Association with us, to bless our most gracious God for hearing and so seasonably answering the prayers of his people; and earnestly to pray for the King,

viz. that God may direct his council, bless the parliament, disappoint the designs of the nation's enemies abroad and at home, revive the work of reformation in these nations, and the power of godliness amongst his people, send forth more labourers into his harvest, and bless the gospel with great success," &c.

From these extracts it is evident, that the Baptist Ministers and Churches, both in town and country, when their principles of attachment to the government were sorely tried, proved themselves firm friends to protestantism and constitutional liberty. They, too, were the people who interceded with God on behalf of a sinful and infidel nation, that was meditating and encouraging such vile oppressive measures against those who were "*the quiet in the land*," and who desired nothing from the government but that which no government on earth has a right to withhold, to be left unmolested while they were worshipping God according to their conscience, and training up their children in the way wherein they thought they should go. Had the Queen attended to the "humble supplication" of the whole body of Dissenters, she would have gained immortal honour as their deliverer, and as having "come to the kingdom for such a time as that;" but as she refused it, they found "help and deliverance from another place."

The sentiments of the protestant Dissenters respecting the fatal measures pursued by Queen Anne, and the prospects they indulged from the accession of the Royal Family of Brunswick to the throne, are elegantly expressed by Dr. Watts, in one of his Lyric Poems.

"PALINODA.

"Britons forgive the forward muse
That dar'd prophetic seals to loose,*

* Alluding to a Poem addressed to the Queen at the beginning of her reign.

(Unskill'd in fate's eternal book,)
And the deep characters mistook:
GEORGE is the name, that glorious star!
Ye saw his splendours beaming far;—
Saw in the east your joys arise,
When ANNA sunk in *Western* skies,
Striking the heavens with crimson gloom,
Emblems of tyranny and *Rome*,
Portending blood and night to come;
'Twas GEORGE diffused a vital ray,
And gave the dying victims day.
His influence sooths the *Russian Bear*,
Calms rising wars, and heals the air;
Join'd with the sun, his beams are hurl'd,
To scatter blessings round the world,
Fulfil whate'er the muse has spoke,
And crown the work that ANNE forsook.

"August 1, 1721."

CHAP. III.

REIGN OF GEORGE I.

1714—1727.

"THE death of Queen Anne," says Crosby, "and the succession in the illustrious House of Hanover, occasioned a very great, but happy change in this kingdom, and gave new life to the protestant interest throughout Europe." The same day that the Queen died, the celebrated Duke of Marlborough, who had resigned his command, and who for several years had been

driven from the Queen's councils, landed at Dover. "On Wednesday the 4th of August, his Grace," says Crosby, "consented to make a kind of public entry into London. This was at the desire of several Noblemen and eminent Citizens, who as it were compelled him to do so. The Member for the borough of Southwark, Sir Charles Cox, who had been much distinguished for his zeal in the protestant cause, with about two hundred substantial inhabitants, many of whom were Baptists, met his Grace on horseback, and attended him through the borough." It was intended that the entrance of his Majesty, *George the First*, should be graced by a large body of English gentlemen, who proposed to ride upon white hoses, bare-headed, with white camblet cloaks, and with a nosegay in their right hand composed of an orange inclosed with laurel; the first, an emblem of King William's having procured for England the protestant succession in the family of Hanover; the latter, as a compliment to the victories of the Duke of Marlborough, which had prepared the way for that happy event. "But," says Crosby, "they were prevented in the execution of their purpose by his Majesty's, not too soon, but unexpected, happy arrival."

The protestant Dissenting Ministers in London were immediately on the alert to devise the best means for testifying their loyalty to the King. On August 4th, a letter was sent to several of the Baptist Ministers, by the Rev. Mr. Tong, of Salters' Hall, desiring them to meet some of the Presbyterian and Independent Ministers on the ensuing Monday, at Hamlin's Coffee-house. At that meeting Mr. Tong said, "that as there had been formerly a committee of the three denominations of Dissenters, to consult of public affairs for the good of the whole body, it was thought convenient, and was desired by several persons, that that committee should be revived." To this all who were present cordially agreed. It was then proposed to the Baptist Ministers, as two of their former committee (Mr. Joseph

Stennett and Mr. John Piggott) were dead, that they should consult the Ministers of their denomination to choose two others in their stead, to meet the committee when it should assemble.

The same afternoon, this matter was represented to the society of Baptist Ministers, who met weekly at the Hanover Coffee-house, Finch Lane. The revival of the committee met their approbation, and Mr. Richard Allen and Mr. Benjamin Stinton were appointed instead of the late lamented Messrs. Stennet and Piggott. At this meeting it was said, that the deceased brethren had been often reflected upon for acting as the representatives of the whole body of Baptist Ministers in London, including those of the General Baptist churches, when they were chosen exclusively by the Particular Baptist Ministers. Therefore, to prevent such unpleasant feelings in future, and for the purpose of cultivating a better understanding with the General Baptist Ministers, Mr. Allen and Mr. Stinton proposed to summon the whole body of Baptist Ministers, both general and particular, to meet at the Hanover Coffee-house on the following Wednesday. When they were assembled, they were told that the design of the meeting was to ascertain, whether they approved of acting in conjunction with the other Dissenting Ministers as formerly; to choose persons to represent them in the committee; and to agree upon terms for a better union and correspondence between themselves.

The first subject occasioned some debating. The question was then put from the chair, "Whether the Baptists should continue to act in conjunction with the other denominations of Dissenters in addressing the King, or in any other thing which related to the public interest of the whole?" This passed in the affirmative. They then agreed to confirm the choice of the three Ministers who had been previously appointed by the Particular Baptists. In relation to the proposal for effecting a closer union and correspondence between the General and Par-

ticular Baptists, this was unanimously approved; and they agreed to meet again on that day month, to consider further on the subject. At the appointed meeting for that purpose it was agreed, that it would greatly tend to maintain affection, and promote friendly correspondence, that such a meeting should be kept once a month, to be attended by the elders, or pastors only. Mr. Jenkins, a General Baptist Minister, was chosen secretary, and several resolutions for the useful conducting of such a meeting were agreed to. Crosby adds, "But this laudable and good design soon dwindled and came to nothing. Why? Because it was the result of ecclesiastics only, who are rarely found to be good politicians. Had they joined with themselves one or two from each of their churches of the most prudent and moderate of their laity, I doubt not but a glorious harmony and good correspondence would have continued with them till now. Let them but try the experiment. The whole Baptist interest united in such a manner, must consequently tend very much to its reputation and increase."

From this statement it will appear, that this monthly meeting of the united body of Baptist Ministers was but of short continuance. Whether the laconic reason assigned by our historian was the only cause of its dwindling away and coming to nothing, the reader must judge. Mr. Crosby was a member and a deacon of the church in which Mr. Benjamin Stinton, brother-in-law to Mr. Crosby, had succeeded their excellent father-in-law, Mr. Benjamin Keach. He might probably be one of "the most prudent and moderate of the laity;" and every body knows that prudence and moderation in a deliberating assembly are always valuable, and, it cannot be denied, have sometimes been greatly needed, not only by ecclesiastics, but even by laymen, notwithstanding they may have considered themselves as good politicians.

The Committee of the Three Denominations of Protestant Dissenting Ministers, lost no time in preparing an address of

congratulation to be presented to the King. The whole body of ministers were convened to hear the proposed address, and they cordially approved and signed it. The Rev. Dr. Williams was chosen to present it; and it was agreed that every minister should accompany him to Court, at the time when the Secretary of State should have informed them, that his Majesty would graciously condescend to receive them.

His Majesty having signified his willingness to receive them, the whole body attended at court, at St. James's, September 28, 1714. They were introduced by his Grace the Duke of Devonshire, and had the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand. They were afterwards introduced to George, Prince of Wales, by the Duke of Argyle, and also kissed the hand of the Prince.

The Address presented by the Rev. Dr. Williams, with his Majesty's answer, appeared in the Gazette of Saturday, October 2, 1714, and are as follow.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

"*The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, of the several Denominations in and about the city of London, &c.*

"May it please your Majesty,

"With thankfulness and joy, equal to the great occasion, we congratulate your Majesty's peaceful accession to the throne, and your own and the Prince's safe arrival, the merciful return of many ardent prayers.

When we recollect your Majesty's descent from the King and Queen of Bohemia, those renowned patrons of the *protestant* religion, we cannot but adore the divine providence which has now rewarded their sufferings for that cause, in their royal offspring, with a crown, that renders your Majesty the head of the whole *protestant* interest. But your Majesty's zeal for the same religion, your known affection for the *liberties of Europe*, and the rights of mankind, with your other celebrated virtues, give

us the surest prospect, that the blessings of your reign will be as extensive as your power.

"The parliamentary entail of the crown upon your illustrious house, we have ever esteemed one of the greatest blessings procured for us, by our late glorious deliverer King William, of immortal memory. *To this happy settlement we have constantly adhered against all temptations and dangers. Our zeal herein has been owned to be very conspicuous, by those noble patriots who now surround your throne.*

"We hold no principles, but what do in conscience oblige us to acknowledge your Majesty for our only lawful and rightful Sovereign; and to do every thing in our power to support your title and government against all pretenders whatsoever.

"Your Majesty's wise and gracious declaration, for which we render our unfeigned thanks, does sensibly relieve us under our present hardships, and gives us ground to hope, that as we are inseparably united in interest and safety, with all that adhere to the succession and monarchy as by law established, so we shall share in that protection and favour, which will make us happy with the rest of your subjects.

"We shall constantly pray, for the long life and prosperity of your Majesty, for their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the branches of your august family. May that God, by whom kings reign, help you to employ your mighty power and interest, that it may be your Majesty's glory to protect the *protestant* religion, to suppress the profaneness of the age, to heal the divisions of your people, to assert the rights of the injured abroad, and to preserve the balance of Europe."

To this Address his Majesty returned this most gracious Answer.

"I AM VERY WELL PLEASED WITH YOUR EXPRESSIONS OF DUTY TO ME, AND YOU MAY DEPEND UPON HAVING MY PROTECTION."

The declaration of his Majesty, referred to by the Ministers, was the following, which the King made in council, September 22, being the first time of his sitting in it.

"*I take this occasion also to express to you, my firm purpose to do all that is in my power, for supporting and maintaining the Churches of England and Scotland, as they are severally by law established; which I am of opinion may be* EFFECTUALLY *done* WITHOUT THE LEAST IMPAIRING THE TOLERATION, ALLOWED BY LAW TO PROTESTANT DISSENTERS, so agreeable to Christian charity, and so necessary to the trade and riches of the kingdom."

The good understanding which now prevailed between the Baptists and Pædobaptists in London, was put to the test by the following circumstance; and it is mentioned to the honour of the Presbyterian Ministers, who had on many occasions been zealous in their opposition to the Baptists.

Mr. Joseph Stokes, a Presbyterian Minister at Horsham in Sussex, published in the year 1714, a little pamphlet in defence of infant baptism, entitled, "A Survey of Infant Baptism, and the Mode of Baptizing." Of this pamphlet the author endeavoured to procure a recommendation to the public, by the Rev. Dr. Williams, and some others of the most noted Presbyterian Ministers in London; but he was told by them, "That seeing things at present were quiet, and there was a good correspondence and harmony between the two Denominations, they thought it not proper to do any thing that might tend to disturb and break it."

This friendly intercourse soon after led to another happy event, namely, the establishment of the Protestant Dissenters' School upon Horselydown, which still exists in prosperous circumstances, and is known by the name of the Maze-pond School.

The following circumstances led to the establishment of this School. The Church of England had several charity schools in

the Borough, in which the children who belonged to them were necessarily constrained to learn the Church Catechism, and to attend the established church. It was known that particular pains had been taken to prejudice the children against the principles and persons of Dissenters. Also many poor but pious Dissenters had been influenced to send their children to them, for the sake of their obtaining the advantages of clothing, &c. though they knew their children were in danger of being taught to despise them on account of their religious opinions.

The Presbyterians had one or two charity schools in London, but in these the Assembly's Catechism was taught, so that the children of Baptists were compelled to learn sentiments, even in dissenting schools, on the subject of baptism, which their parents disapproved. Mr. Benjamin Stinton had been very desirous of founding a free school before the death of the late Queen, but the spirit of the times would not admit of the attempt.

After her death he consulted Mr. John Sladen, an Independent. Some of the Ministers in the Borough thought with Mr. Stinton that it was necessary to do what they could for redressing these grievances, of which they had long complained; and that while they separated from others, for the sake of maintaining religious sentiments which they thought more agreeable to the word of God, they ought not to be behind them in the works of charity: they therefore resolved to establish a *Protestant Dissenting School*, upon such principles that Dissenters of all denominations might unite in its support.

To carry this design into effect, it was agreed that six Ministers, three Baptists, and three Pædobaptists, should unite in preaching a Lord's-day evening lecture at Mr. Stinton's Meeting house in Horselydown. There were of the Baptists the Rev. Messrs. Benjamin Stinton, Edward Wallin, and Richard Parkes: the Independents were the Rev. Messrs. Isaac Maudits, John Killinghall, and John Sladen.

This measure was so warmly recommended by the ministers, and so cordially approved by their friends, that a subscription of more that £100 per annum was soon raised. The subscribers were summoned to a general meeting, and the six ministers, and six lay gentlemen, three of whom were Baptists, were appointed managers for the year: these were Messrs. Abr. Atkins, Thomas Hall, Luke Leader, John Sweet, William Dell, and John Valley.

They determined that the school should be composed of forty boys, who were to be annually clothed, and to be under the care of a master, at £35 per year. The master was to be a protestant Dissenter; and was, in addition to instructing them in reading, writing, and arithmetic, to pray with the scholars morning and evening, and to teach them the principles of the Christian religion, and singing of psalms. The parents were required to engage, that they would take care their children should attend some Dissenting place of worship on the mornings and afternoons of the Lord's-days, and attend with the master the lectures in the evening. A Meeting-house, in Fair Street, which had been used by the Presbyterians, was taken and converted into a school room, and dwelling house for the master; and Mr. Robert Baker, an occasional teacher of Mr. Stinton's church, was unanimously chosen to that office.

The rules, &c. were published at length by Crosby, for which he assigns the following reasons. "This being," he says, "the first public charity-school in which the Baptists were an equal part of the constitution, as well as one of the most *catholic* foundations of any yet in England; and because some great attempts have been made by the Presbyterians, though without success, to change the constitution; made me think it necessary to erect a monument thereunto, by giving it a place in this history, that after ages may know upon what foundation the same was constituted." The only peculiarity in the constitution of this school, and which at that time excited so much the zeal of its

supporters, was the ninth article; "That a catechism be printed for the use of the school, agreeing with the Assembly's Catechism, *the 95th question and answer, referring to the subject of* BAPTISM, *being left out!*" They accordingly printed a catechism with that omission only, "approved of, for the use of the charity-school at Horselydown, Southwark."

The annual sermon was first preached by the Rev. Matthew Clark, at Pinners' Hall, on the 20th of October, 1714, the day of his Majesty's coronation. The collection after the sermon amounted to £28. 14*s*.

About this time the attention of the Baptist London ministers was directed towards Scotland, in consequence of a Mr. Thomas Lowrey, a licentiate preacher of the church of Scotland, having been baptized, and admitted a member of the church in Spitalfields. This minister produced his licence signed by the moderator of the assembly at Peebles, and three other letters from ministers of his acquaintance, as testimonials of his Christian character. He informed the ministers, that he had for several years been dissatisfied with infant baptism, and that there were several Presbyterian Ministers in Scotland of the same mind with himself on the subject of believers' baptism. After several of the Ministers had heard him preach, and were satisfied with his knowledge of the gospel, and ability for preaching it, they proposed to the society which met monthly at the Hanover Coffee-house, that "on account of Mr. Lowrey's Scotch pronunciation, he should return to Scotland to promote the doctrine and practice of believers' baptism in that kingdom; where none had been heard of who had openly professed it, though several stood well affected towards it." The design was approved, and it was agreed to provide for his support for one year; but at the time fixed upon for his departure, he was visited by a dangerous sickness. Crosby says, "that he was not acquainted with the issue of this business."

In order to preserve the line of our history, it will now be

necessary to advert to what was alluded to in the last chapter, viz. the attempt which was made to overthrow the government by substituting the rejected popish family of Stuart, instead of the protestant House of Hanover. Many of the disappointed Tory Lords joined in the design, and promoted a rebellion in favour of the Pretender. This was in the beginning of the year 1715. We notice it, not for the purpose of giving a full history, but because it serves to illustrate the principles and actions of the English Baptists. It is extremely gratifying to find, with what ardent zeal and distinguished loyalty the protestant Dissenters adhered to the House of Brunswick, and how warmly their writers of that period eulogize the first British King of that illustrious house. The following quotation is taken from Crosby.

"By a concurrence of wonderful providences, it pleased God to give a quiet and peaceable accession to his most gracious Majesty to the throne of his ancestors, to which he was received with one full voice, and consent of tongue and heart, and the united joy of every good subject and good Protestant, as their only lawful and rightful Sovereign. But although from the moment his Majesty ascended the throne, his reign had been one series of wisdom, justice, and clemency;—his labours constant, unwearied, and successful, to retrieve the honour and reputation of these nations, to establish the trade, and recover the wealth of these kingdoms;—and although all imaginable encouragement had been given to the Church of England, and all tenderness shewn, even to his popish subjects, and his constant care had been to procure the universal good of his people: yet to delude, disorder, and corrupt the minds of his Majesty's good subjects, the most groundless jealousies were fomented against his wise and happy administration; and in many parts of his kingdom, the most unnatural, unexampled riots and tumults were stirred up and encouraged against his peaceable protestant subjects, under false pretences of zeal for the Church of England." The

cry of these infuriated bigots was, "The Church is in danger;" —"No foreigners;"—"No Presbyterians;"—"King James III." &c. The Baptists had two Meeting-houses demolished at this time. One was at Oxford,* at which city they also destroyed those of the Presbyterians and Quakers; the other Baptist place was at Wrexham in Derbyshire.

The united body of protestant Dissenting Ministers in London were forward in testifying their attachment to the King and his government, and prepared an Address, which was presented by Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, a Baptist Minister,† who was introduced to his Majesty by the Duke of Newcastle, Aug. 16, 1715. The Address and his Majesty's answer were published in the Gazette of the next day. They are as follow:—

To the King's most excellent Majesty.

"May it please your Majesty,

"We, your Majesty's most loyal subjects, think ourselves obliged in duty and gratitude humbly to acknowledge that seasonable protection which your Majesty has been pleased to give to those of our persuasion, from the late *rebellious tumults*; and for your gracious answer to the Address of your *faithful Commons*, wherein they desire, that a full compensation be made to those, whose sufferings they so justly impute to their zeal and firm adherence to your Majesty, and to your government. We can assure your Majesty, that no just occasion has been given by us to our fellow-subjects for any such treatment; nor can the principles which oblige us to dissent from the Church of

* It was a dwelling-house near the castle; one room of which was appropriated for worship, Crosby vol. iv. p. 137.

† "It was not thought proper," says Crosby, "for the whole body of ministers to go up with this Address, as on his Majesty's accession to the throne, but four of each denomination were chosen for that purpose."

England be a reasonable provocation to any who have the least regard to the common rights of mankind, as the rules of the Christian religion.

"We desire nothing more than to enjoy our civil rights, with a just liberty; to profess our own religious sentiments, which we take to be a privilege *due to all men.* We have been always ready to assist the Church of England in defence of the *protestant* religion, when in real and imminent danger; being agreed with them, and all protestant churches, in those principles that began the Reformation, and which can alone justify and support it.

"When there has been a design to introduce *popery* and an *arbitrary power,* the *protestant Dissenters* have generally been first attacked. Nor know we any other reason why we have now suffered the outrage of *Papists, Non-jurors,* and other disaffected persons, but that they were sure we were a body of men, fixed in our duty to your Majesty, and lay the most exposed to popular insults, against which your Majesty, and your two Houses of Parliament, in your great wisdom and goodness, have given us a seasonable, and, as we hope, an effectual security for time to come.

"Whilst your Majesty's government is disturbed at home, and threatened with an invasion from abroad, we can answer for those of our persuasion, that there are not any of them, whose principles and inclinations will not influence them to assist and support your Majesty and the protestant religion to the utmost of their power. We look upon ourselves as bound by the strongest ties of duty, gratitude, and interest, to acknowledge and maintain your Majesty's undoubted right and title to the imperial crown of these realms; and to declare our utmost abhorrence of all attempts, either at home or abroad, in favour of a *popish Pretender.* May that gracious providence, which has so signally appeared in bringing your Majesty to the throne of these kingdoms, continue to protect and defend your royal

person and family against all the attempts of your open and secret enemies."

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

"I AM VERY MUCH CONCERNED AT THE UNCHRISTIAN AND BARBAROUS TREATMENT WHICH THOSE OF YOUR PERSUASION HAVE MET WITH IN SEVERAL PARTS OF MY KINGDOM; AND CARE SHALL BE TAKEN THAT A FULL COMPENSATION SHALL BE MADE THEM FOR THEIR SUFFERINGS. I THANK YOU FOR THIS ADDRESS, AND YOU MAY BE ASSURED OF MY PROTECTION."

The very full and unequivocal answer which was returned to this Address, provoked the high church party exceedingly; and therefore some attempts were made to expose it, and those who had presented it. A specimen of this rancorous and abusive spirit is to be found in the "Weekly Journal," a Tory newspaper, which states as follows:—"The same day an Address was made to his Majesty by the whole body of Dissenting Ministers, viz. Presbyterians, Independents, and Anabaptists; the latter of which, it being in their turn, had the honour to present it; and they chose Mr. Hodges to perform that ceremony. The names of the other Anabaptists are, Mr. Stinton, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Noble, who, though they were all formerly of very mean occupations, have, since their call, been looked upon as the most eminent preachers among that dipping set of people," &c. Crosby supposes the cause of all this contemptuous ribaldry was, that the King had said, "*I am very much concerned at the unchristian and barbarous treatment which those of your profession have met with.*" Opportunities have sometimes occurred, when rulers have been able to ascertain the just characters of their subjects; when *actions*, and not *professions*, have been the test by which they have been tried.

It is very pleasing to know that there was not one protestant Dissenter that joined in this unnatural rebellion. The author wishes he could say as much respecting the members of the

Church of England; but a faithful regard to truth prevents it. At the conclusion of the speech of the Lord High Chancellor, made to the six condemned Lords, previous to their sentence, he says, "I must be so just to such of your lordships as profess the religion of the *Church of Rome*, that you had one temptation, and that a great one, to engage you in this treason, which the others had not; in that it was evident, success on your part must for ever have established popery in this kingdom, and that probably you could never have again so fair an opportunity. But then, how must those *Protestants* be covered with confusion, who entered into the same measures without so much as capitulating for their religion, (that ever I could find from any examination I have seen or heard,) or so much as requiring, much less obtaining, a frail promise that it should be preserved, or even tolerated!"

On returning to the history of our churches, we find that an instance is recorded in this year, of an Independent Minister in London embracing the sentiments of the Baptists. This was Mr. Jonathan Owen, who had been pastor of a large congregational church in Deadman's Place, Southwark. He was, it is said, a minister of good report, and had been much esteemed for his solid and orthodox preaching. He was now 60 years of age, and was baptized by Mr. Richard Adams, August 18, 1715. After his baptism he preached from Rom. i. 18;—*Who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* He acknowledged in this sermon that he had for several years been guilty of this sin, by stifling the convictions which he had felt that infant baptism could not be supported by the Scriptures. He stated, that he had lately looked more into the controversy by reading Dr. Gale's Reply to Dr. Wall's History of Infant Baptism, and that having consulted the Scriptures, and prayed for divine direction, he had been fully convinced that baptism was to be administered only to believers, and was only to be performed by immersion.

The sensation produced among some of the old friends of

Mr. Owen, may be judged of, from some of the ministers, and others who had attended his baptism, thinking it necessary to publish the following statement:—

"Whereas, we are informed that a report is spread abroad, that when Mr. Jonathan Owen, late Independent Minister, was baptized by immersion, he was in great danger of his life, and that there was but an inch between him and death, (as they express it,)—We, whose names are underwritten, being present at the administration, do testify, that the said report is utterly false, and that his baptism was performed with great decency and safety; and immediately after, Mr. Owen himself both prayed and preached to the spectators present. Witness our hands,

RICHARD ADAMS, Administrator.
MARK KEY,
BENJAMIN STINTON, } Pastors.
—— HUMPHREYS,
—— MATTHEWS, } Deacons."

To conclude this account of Mr. Owen, we add, that he soon afterwards visited Bristol for the purpose of assisting the venerable Andrew Gifford, at the Pithay. This aged minister had reached his 74th year, and was removed about six years afterwards. As a testimonial to the character and talents of Mr. Owen, the London ministers sent a letter, of which the following is an extract:—

"We whose names are underwritten think ourselves bound, in answer to your desire, and in justice to Mr. Owen, to give you the following account.

"He has for many years been a Pædobaptist minister, amongst those of the congregational persuasion, and for a considerable time had the care of a large and flourishing church of that denomination; and always, to the best of our knowledge, behaved himself suitably to his holy profession as a Christian, and his character as a minister. He has of late publicly *re-*

nounced his infant baptism; and was, on the 18th of August, 1715, baptized by our honoured brother Mr. Richard Adams, in presence of several other ministers; since which he has received the Lord's Supper with the church meeting in Devonshire-square, and preached to divers of our congregations with approbation. We hope he may be very serviceable to the interest of Christ, and particularly of *that truth* by which we are distinguished. We conclude with our hearty prayers that the Lord may bless and succeed your labours together; and we commend both him and you unto God, and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified; and remain

Your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

RICHARD ADAMS,
BENJAMIN STINTON,
EDWARD WALLIN,
NATHANIEL HODGES,"
and others.

In this year the Committee of the general body of Dissenting Ministers was increased, two of each denomination being added to the number. Those for the Baptists were, Mr. Abraham Mulliner, of the General Baptists, and Mr. John Noble, of the Particular Baptists.

At this period the Baptists in Pennsylvania opened a correspondence with the ministers in London. When it is considered to what a multitude the Baptists have increased in America, during little more than a century from that time, it is curious to see from what small beginnings they have arisen; and it is pleasing to reflect upon the assistance that was then afforded them by some of our worthy brethren, the particulars of which are worth preserving.

The following is an extract of a letter written by Mr. Abel

Morgan, dated Philadelphia, August 12, 1714 :—"We are now nine churches, having, for the better assisting one the other, four general meetings; 1. At Welch Tract, which all the Pennsylvanian Churches resort to in May. 2. At Cohansy, for conveniency of those parts, where Philadelphia assists. 3. At Middleton, where also Philadelphia assists. 4. At Philadelphia, in the month of September, to which all do resort, and where most of the public matters are settled, by messengers from each particular church.

"In these churches there are about five hundred members, but who are greatly scattered on this main land. Our ministers are necessitated to labour with their hands. We hope, if it please God to supply us with more help, we shall be more churches in a little time. Most churches administer the sacrament once a month. These ministers are all sound in the faith; and we practise most things like the British churches."

Another letter was received from these Ministers, dated July 20, 1715, wherein they gave a particular account of the beginning and progress of the Gospel in those parts, the present number of their churches, the names and circumstances of their ministers, &c; and desired to keep up a correspondence with the English Baptist ministers, and particularly those in London, requesting also that they might be assisted with books, &c. "for the preservation and further promoting of the truth in those parts." The ministers having laid the letter before their congregations, two generous gentlemen, Mr. Thomas Hollis, and Mr. John Taylor, gave a supply of books: Mr. Hollis sent twelve copies of Mr. Burkitt's Annotations on the New Testament, directing that each minister in those parts might have a copy; and Mr. John Taylor gave twenty pounds' worth of old books, and several copies of the Baptist Catechism. This present was accompanied with the following letter :—

"*To the Elders and Churches of Jesus Christ, in Pennsylvania, in America, baptized upon profession of their faith, the Elders of the Baptized Churches in and about London, send greeting,*

"Honoured and beloved Brethren,

"We received yours of the 20th of July, 1715, and were not a little pleased with the particular account you therein give us of the beginning and progress of the gospel in those parts of the world, and of the number and present state of the churches, for which we return you our hearty thanks. We have not all had opportunity yet to read it in our several congregations, but design so to do at a convenient time. We rejoice to hear of your welfare, and bless God that he has enabled you, by his grace, to stand fast in the truth against all opposition; and that after so many troubles and temptations, most of you are settled again in peace, and are blessed with an able and successful ministry. May you continually go on with the same zeal and courage, and we shall not fail to offer up our sincere prayers to God for your farther establishment in the faith and comforts of the gospel. And as we have abundant reason to believe the representations you make, of the difficulties and hardships which you still labour under; so we assure you of our readiness to do any thing in our power for the advancement of the gospel, and promoting the truths of Jesus Christ among you.

"We have recommended your case to two generous gentlemen, Mr. Thomas Hollis and Mr. John Taylor, who have for your present encouragement sent over a parcel of books, which we hope will come safe to your hands, and be distributed as they have directed.

"As for a fund for the support of the ministry, we have not been able to raise any such thing for the benefit of the churches in England, though our interest has suffered very much in

some parts of this kingdom for want of it; so that there cannot at present be any thing of this nature expected. However, if it should please God to bless our churches with rich and generous members, *we should gladly encourage a fund for promoting the gospel in foreign parts, as we find there is among some other denominations of Protestants.* For the present we heartily embrace your proposal of keeping up a correspondence by letters, and shall be very ready to negotiate any affairs for you, relating to the interest of religion, either with particular persons or the government.

"We hope you enjoy a full liberty for the exercise of your religion, and live in peace and amity with the other denominations of Dissenters, as, blessed be God, we do here, and have a hopeful prospect of its continuance. And we recommend it to you as our advice, that you would endeavour after as great a union and correspondence with those of different persuasions as the truths you profess will admit of; but especially that you carefully maintain love and union among yourselves, and keep up your associate meetings for that purpose. And now, brethren, we commend you to God and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified; and remain,

Your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel,

[Signed by the General Body of Baptist Ministers, assembling monthly at the Hanover Coffee-house, Finch-lane.]

London, January 4, 1716-17.

P. S. Please to direct your letters to Mr. Benjamin Stinton, at Horselydown, in Southwark."

This correspondence was maintained for some time; but it is probable that the premature and lamented death of Mr. Ben-

jamin Stinton brought it to a termination. There are two other letters from the brethren in America, preserved by Crosby, which show how greatly the present of books sent them the year before had affected their minds with pious gratitude and Christian affection.

"*The Church of Christ at Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, baptized upon profession of faith, to the Elders of the Baptized Churches in and about London, especially those concerned lately in writing to us, send Christian salutations.*

"Beloved Brethren,

"Yours of the 4th of January last came to hand, with the books from our esteemed brethren, Mr. Hollis and Mr. Taylor; for which beneficence we return our hearty thanks, on behalf of all interested in the benefit of the same. Having seen but few of our brethren abroad, we thank you for recommending our case to the above worthy benefactors. We likewise thank them for their generosity in bestowing liberally; but above all we thank our good God that brought us to the fellowship of his Son, and hath with him given us all good things to enjoy. We take this donation of books as a token of Divine favour, regarding us in our low estate. We trust, and hope, and wait also, for the return of the smiles of God's face unto us, and that he will yet bless us, not utterly forsaking us, though we are but a remnant. Many have fallen like untimely fruit; but, notwithstanding, we are preserved to this day. Give God glory on our behalf.

"We do assure you, that your letter and books have met with welcome entertainment among us in general. The seasonableness thereof has much revived our spirits, and tended much to cement us in this city in love, it being as sun-shine upon the dispersion of a cloud. The particulars of the one and

the other we judge proper to defer, though we cannot look back upon them without amazement.

"Your letter was read in our meetings in town and country. We concluded that the books might be disposed of as intended; the family books for the benefit of well-disposed folks; the annotations to be for particular qualified persons. The other books for public use, for our leading brethren to resort to, are lodged here in the city, to be lent and returned again; whereby the rising generation may have the benefit of them as well as the present. The contents of the letters, and a catalogue of the books, are recorded in our church-books, to prevent all mistakes.

"The generality of our associated congregations, so far as we know, are in peace; but few additions any where lately, though within a few years past all our churches have increased more or less. The country is overrun with Quakers, who in general will not hear us; and those who would, dare not by reason of their awfully strict discipline. But God can give another shock to that kingdom which sits as queen here, and which thinks not to see widowhood any more.

"In this country most of the errors of the ancients have been new dressed over; but through mercy they seem to creep more and more into holes. The errors about the personality of the Holy Ghost, and the non-imputation of original sin, with others, lurk about the tents of some who are denominated Baptists; but they utterly disown us, as we indeed do them. One Hammond's (a Baptist) book is much in request with some here. What is made of a day famous in Jewry we will leave. But if some substantial informing tracts were in their hands, it is probable things would be otherwise.

"As there is no material alteration since our former letter in the state of our churches, we shall conclude with our hearty love to you all; hoping that as you have been acquainted with our estate, we shall not be forgotten by you in your solemn ad-

dresses at a throne of grace, for such blessings and favours as we stand in need of, and that may tend to the glory of God's name; hoping also to have the continuance of the comfortable correspondence so happily begun.

"Not willing to be further tedious in writing, or burdensome in respect to complaints and expectations, we commit you all to God, that can make all blessings abound to you and us; remaining,

Your brethren in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,

ABEL MORGAN,
SAMUEL JONES,
WILLIAM KINNERSLEY,
EDWARD CHURCH,
and eight others.

Philadelphia, September 13, 1717, *at our Meeting for business, on behalf of the whole Church.*

P. S. Direct to Abel Morgan, or Edward Church, in Philadelphia."

The letter sent from the Associated churches was thus addressed:—

"To our reverend brethren, the elders of the baptized churches in and about London; and our good and generous benefactors, Mr. Hollis, and Mr. Taylor;—we the Elders, Ministers, and Messengers of the churches under the same denomination in Pennsylvania, and the Jerseys in America, met in our General Meeting held at Philadelphia the 22d, 23d, and 24th of September 1717, send our most hearty salutations.

"Beloved brethren in our Lord Jesus Christ, grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, through our Lord and Redeemer.

"Your letters we have seen, and the books according to catalogue are come to hand, and by our brethren in the city set-

tled prudently, whereby all of us may have the benefit thereof, that our successors may profit as well as we. The fame of this makes some rumour abroad, and profit at home; so that we hope this good work may bring forth yet more good fruit to the advantage of religion and the glory of God: which we hope will be returned in a hundred fold of benefit to yourselves, according to the seed sown.

"The soundness of the authors in general will be a singular advantage in this country, and what we find otherwise we shall endeavour to distinguish. We think, that the very minds of the people in common here are tainted with *Arminianism*, *Socinianism*, and what not. The common notion of religion among them is like a leprous house; it is not to be mended by patching, but must be pulled down and rebuilt upon the right foundation, the covenant of grace. This we labour to do, and therefore go against the current of the times; that others who succeed us may see no cause to lament our having gone before them: and this we will still do, God permitting.

"We hope to hear from you the next opportunity that may present. So returning our hearty thanks to you, for the favours already showed us, we remain

Your brethren in the Lord, and in the
fellowship of the gospel,
THOMAS ABBOT,
JOHN BURROWS,"
and about nineteen more.

About this period five of the Baptist congregations made collections in aid of some of the French refugees who had settled in the city after the revocation of the edict of Nantz. The letter which their Ministers sent to the Society of Calvinistic Ministers, at the Hanover Coffee-house, is worthy of being preserved in our history.

"*To the Reverend our most honoured Brethren, the Pastors and Ministers of the Baptized Congregations.*

"The French ministers banished their native country for the cause of their holy religion, humbly represent to you, that in the year 1696, the Court having suspended for some time the subsistence which used to be granted them, they were obliged to apply themselves to the charity of their most honoured brethren, the ministers of the baptized churches, who kindly helped them in their necessities. At present being afflicted with the same or greater necessities than ever, by having been entirely forsaken for the last two years and a half of the Queen's reign, and a year and a half of King George's; they take the liberty again to implore your Christian and brotherly assistance, humbly beseeching you, if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of charity, if any communion of spirit, if any cordial affections, you would complete our joy in assisting us, in such manner as your piety and charity shall judge proper. Our great ages, and continual infirmities, warning us every day of our approaching end, give us just cause to believe, that this shall be the last time we shall address ourselves to you, at least in the like case. In the mean time we pray the Almighty to bless your persons, your families, and your churches, with all blessings, temporal and eternal: which are the ardent and sincere prayers of

——— BACON, 77 years old;
FRANCIS GRONGUET, 74 years;
JOHN JAMES SOLIXHAC, 82 years;
SAMUEL VEHARD, 84 years.

Witness, MONS. GOMARE.

London, July 30, 1716."

The liberality of Mr. Thomas Hollis was expressed at this time towards the poor of several of the churches in London. Mr. Benjamin Stinton was requested by the following note, dated

October 2, 1715, to become the almoner of that worthy gentleman;—"One hundred guineas delivered to Mr. Benjamin Stinton by Thomas Hollis. Mr. Stinton is entreated to pay to the deacons of the several churches underwritten, the sums annexed to their names. And the deacons are desired to receive it as an extra gift to the poor, with the advice of their minister, and, if they please, to give a list of the names, and how distributed, signed by the deacons, and witnessed by the minister if he please."

It appears from the following list, that they were all of the Particular Baptist denomination. It is highly probable that it is the list of the churches which were in either an annual or monthly Association, though we have no certain data from which to draw that conclusion.

Churches.	*Guineas.*	*To whom paid.*
MR. HODGES'S, Artillery-street, Spital-fields	10	MR. GRANGE.
—— ALLEN'S, Paul's-alley, Barbican	10	—— DARBY.
—— STINTON'S, Goat-street, Horsleydown	10	—— ATKINS.
—— ELLIOT'S, Gravel-lane, Wapping	10	—— ALLING.
—— WALLIN'S, Flower-de-luce-court	10	—— TICKNER.
—— NOBLE'S, Tallow-chandlers' Hall	10	—— STAPLES.
—— REES'S, Limehouse	5	—— BORROWS.
—— HARRISON'S, Little Wild-street	5	—— PERKINS.
—— PARKES'S, White-street, Collier's-rents	5	—— EATON.
—— WILSON'S (EBENEZER,) Walbrook	5	—— SHARP.
—— SKEPP'S, Cripplegate	5	—— WATSON.
—— SAVAGE'S, Mill-yard, Goodman's-fields	5	—— HARPER.
—— DOUGLAS'S, Virginia-street	5	—— CHAMBERLAIN.
—— ADAMS'S, Devonshire-square	5	—— TOMS.

Thomas Hollis, Esq. and his brother John Hollis, Esq. undertook in the year 1716, to promote another work of public utility to the Baptists in London: this was to procure a convenient baptistery, for the use of all the congregations which should be admitted by the Messrs. Hollis to that privilege.

There had been a place for baptizing for some years before, in Fair Street, Horselydown; but it was not sufficiently large or central for accommodating the spectators who usually attended. It was therefore resolved, that the meeting-house in Barbican, formerly Mr. John Gosnold's, and then Mr. Richard Allen's, would be the most suitable situation. The expenses incurred in making the baptistery,* and in repairing the meeting-house, amounted to upwards of £600; towards which £137 were collected, and the remaining sum of £463 was paid by the above-mentioned gentlemen. The place was finished November 20, 1716.

To regulate the baptizings, a certificate was granted to approved ministers, and a register kept of the names of all persons baptized, and by whom. The charge for the use of the necessary accommodations, attendance, &c. was two shillings for each person baptized.

The next year I find that three Ministers in the borough, Messrs. Foxwell, Stinton, and Wallin, resolved to enlarge and repair the ancient baptizing-place in Horselydown, by erecting a meeting-house, with dressing-rooms adjoining, "for the more decent administration of the ordinance of baptism." The meeting-house was thirty feet by twenty, and there were three vestries of eleven feet square each. The expense of this measure, with suits of apparel, &c. it was estimated would amount to £130.

The Baptist Ministers sent the following letter to their

* The description of this Baptistery, as given by Crosby, may be seen vol. ii. p. 225.

churches upon this subject, explaining the regulations they had adopted concerning it. The reader will see that it contains some oblique allusions to what they considered an improper management of the Baptistery in Barbican.

"Beloved Brethren,

"It being earnestly desired by several persons, that the ancient baptizing place at Horselydown should be repaired, believing it will be for the interest of the Baptists, and a better accommodation to several of their churches, that there should be two places kept up for that use, as there have been for some years past: And whereas it is designed, that the propriety of this place shall not be lodged in any single person, or in any one community, but that every congregation that shall advance £10 towards the charge of its reparation, shall have a propriety therein equal with others, secured to them by a trustee of their own choosing; and that every congregation who shall advance any less sum, shall be entitled to the free use thereof, without paying more for any persons to be there baptized, than any other the more favoured whatsoever: We have therefore thought it fit, to communicate this design to all the churches, that so every one that approves of it, may have, if they please, the same privilege with ourselves, and an opportunity of joining with us in this good and public undertaking; and take leave to subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in the faith and
fellowship of the gospel,
NATHANIEL FOXWELL,
JOHN NOBLE,"
and others.

The following list of churches, while it shows by whom the money was contributed, serves to throw some light on the state of the churches at that period, if we are to estimate the num-

ber of persons in their congregations, or the ability of their members, by the amount of their contributions.

	£.	s.	d.
MR. NATHANIEL FOXWELL'S, Fair-street	20	0	0
—— BENJAMIN STINTON'S, Goat-street	20	0	0
—— EDWARD WALLIN'S, Flower-de-luce-court	20	0	0
—— MARK KEY'S, Devonshire-square	10	0	0
—— JOHN NOBLE'S, Tallow-chandlers' Hall	10	0	0
—— THOMAS DEWHURST'S, Turners' Hall	10	0	0
—— LEWIS DOUGLAS'S, Virginia-street	10	0	0
—— JOHN BIDDLE'S, Deptford	5	0	0
—— BENJAMIN INGRAM'S, Hart-street	5	0	0
—— ABRAHAM MULLINER'S, White's-alley*	8	10	0

This place was licensed, according to the Act of Toleration, in the court of the Bishop of Winchester, and secured in the hands of trustees, for the use of the churches, which, by their contributions, had become proprietors. I understand that this baptistery was used till about fifty years ago.

March 1, 1717, a report was made to the Particular Baptist Ministers, at their weekly meeting at the Coffee-house Finch-lane, that the Baptists and Quakers in Northamptonshire had resolved upon having a public disputation on the points of difference between them; and that several of the principal of the "Friends" in London being very uneasy respecting it, (as they apprehended, from the political tumults which had taken place at several towns in the country, that it might be attended with very ill consequences to the Dissenters in general,) were therefore desirous of conferring with the Baptist ministers upon the occasion.

Several persons of these denominations met the same evening; and on finding that there were but four days before the

* Mr. Foxwell, Mr. Ingram, and Mr. Mulliner, were General Baptists.

appointed meeting was to take place, they agreed to send off immediately the following letter, desiring them to desist from the public dispute.

"LONDON, *the 1st day of the first month*, 1716-17.

"Whereas we are informed, that a public disputation is designed, between the Baptists and the people called Quakers, at Burton in Northamptonshire, or thereabouts, on the 5th day of this instant, upon some of those points wherein they differ from one another; we whose names are under written, having consulted together on this affair, and apprehending that the said public meeting may be attended with very bad consequences, considering there have been several tumults lately in England, and that an invasion designed by the enemies of our King and country has been lately discovered; and also that several disaffected persons would be glad of the least occasion to represent the peaceable Dissenters as fomentors of tumults and disorders, as well as themselves: we, therefore, earnestly entreat and advise our friends, as well on the one side as the other, that they would decline the said public assembling, and lay aside their intended disputation. We subscribe ourselves, your hearty friends and well-wishers,

JOHN NOBLE, MARK KEY, EDW. WALLIN, JOHN SKEPP, BEN. STINTON, } Elders of several Baptist Churches in London.

GEO. WHITEHEAD, JOHN BUTCHER, JOHN KNIGHT, SIMEON WARNER, } Your friends called Quakers.

This letter did not produce the end designed. The meeting was held; the dispute was conducted in presence of a large number of persons; and at the close of the day, not having had time to discuss all the subjects on which they differed, they appointed another day (the 4th of June) to continue the debate.

It should seem that the Baptists had felt themselves to be unequal in argument to the Quakers, who, it is said, were "some of their best qualified men from London." They resolved, however, to be a match for them in the next rencounter, and therefore sent to request the Rev. Dr. John Gale to come down and "assist them in vindicating their principles!"

Dr. Gale communicated this request to the united body of Baptist Ministers at their place of meeting, the Hanover Coffee-house, Finch-lane. They being still of opinion that the disturbed state of the country made it exceedingly improper to hold such a meeting, sent to the "Friends," desiring a conference with them. This was held May 3, and the following letter was drawn up and sent to the pertinacious and angry polemics in Northamptonshire:—

"London, the 22d of the third month, called May.

"*To our friends in Northamptonshire, who go under the denomination of Baptists and Quakers.*

"We are informed, that notwithstanding the advice sent in a former letter, there was a dispute held between several of you on the 5th day of the first month, called March, last; and that, as the effect of that, there is another proposed to be held on the 6th of the fourth month next, called June, of which we declare our dislike, as well as of the former; for though we hope we have the same zeal for our principles, and love for whatever we have embraced for truth, as any of our brethren, yet we think such public disputes don't tend to promote it, they being usually followed with very ill consequences, as well as that the present state of public affairs renders them at this time more especially unseasonable. The event of the former meeting doth show that the consequent is like to be worse; for, from contending, we perceive some on both sides are grown hot, which we fear, if not watched against, will destroy

mutual love, arise to strife and envy, be a means to exasperate those who are of a different persuasion from us, give a handle to the enemies of both to misrepresent us to the government, and at last end in an unchristian strife and trouble.

"We do therefore earnestly entreat you, as well on the one side as the other, to forbear the intended meeting, and not to insist upon such public ways of striving with each other, seeing there are other methods which will be less offensive, and more informing to those who are in search of truth. We hope you will take us, in this whole affair, to be what we really are,

Your friends and well-wishers,

BENJ. STINTON, JOHN GALE, LEWIS DOUGLAS, JOS. BURROUGHS, JOSEPH JENKINS, } Your brethren of the Baptist persuasion.

GEO. WHITEHEAD, JOHN KNIGHT, THOMAS PITSLOW, WM. ARMITSTEAD, SIMEON WARNER, } Your friends called Quakers.

On the receipt of this letter, though they were very reluctant to forego the pleasures of a verbal gladiatorial combat, yet, after some consideration, both parties agreed to withdraw from the theatre of contention, and to live in peace.

The London Ministers of the three Denominations had not presented any address to his Majesty at the suppression of the rebellion, as most of the corporations and public bodies had done. His Majesty having now returned from Hanover, and a new plot having been discovered for an invasion of the nation by the Swedes, at the instigation of the English Jacobites, they resolved to embrace this opportunity for again expressing their sentiments of attachment to his Majesty, and their zeal for the protestant government.

When the Ministers were assembled for considering the address, which had been prepared by the Committee, they found more difficulties in coming to an agreement than they had experienced on former occasions. Some of them were for

speaking plainly of the hardships the Dissenters lay under, and of the little regard that was shown to their complaints of the persecuting acts which still existed against them, notwithstanding their steadfast loyalty to his Majesty, and their zeal for his royal house and the protestant interest. Others of them thought that complaints of that nature would come better from the laity than from the ministers, as they were principally affected by the operation of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Bills. An Address, therefore, containing neither complaints nor remonstrances, was drawn up by the Committee, and afterwards approved by the whole body; but by the contrivance of some persons it was not presented.

The *Committee* were again convened to re-consider the matter, and to prepare another draught; and it was proposed that some gentlemen of the laity should be invited to unite with the Committee, to assist the ministers with their advice on such public occasions. In consequence of this the Presbyterians chose three, viz. Messrs. Barrington, Grey Nevil, and Atwood; the Independents two, viz. Messrs. Gould and Hollis; and the Baptists two, viz. Mr. Goddard, a deacon of the church at Turners' Hall, and Mr. Marlow.

These gentlemen met with the Committee, and assisted them with their advice, but refused to unite with them in presenting the Address. It was therefore drawn up as the Address of the Ministers only, and, after it had been approved by the whole body, it was presented, March 4, 1717, by the Rev. Dr. Calamy, who was attended by twelve other ministers, four of each denomination. The day afterwards it was published in the Gazette, with his Majesty's answer.

To the King's most excellent Majesty.

"May it please your Majesty,

"Though we are very ambitious of professing the allegiance

and duty we owe to your Majesty, on every occasion; yet we never make these professions with greater readiness and alacrity, than when your Majesty's government is unhappily threatened with any disturbance at home, or from abroad; such occasions giving us the best opportunity to express that zeal and fidelity by which we are always desirous to be distinguished. As we offered up constant prayers to Almighty God for the safety of your Majesty's person while you were abroad, and have since sent up our hearty thanks for your Majesty's safe return to these your dominions; so we reckon it our great felicity, among the rest of your faithful subjects, that your Majesty is in this your kingdom before a rebellion, concerted between a *restless faction* and some foreign ministers, was to break out.

"We congratulate your Majesty with all humility on the success of your counsels abroad, which tends to secure your person and government from the malicious designs of your enemies; and that, as your Majesty, upon visiting your hereditary countries, saw some branches of your royal family in health, so, upon your return from them, you found your kingdoms in peace and tranquillity, by the prudent administration of her Royal Highness the Princess, and recovered from a danger which gave all your Majesty's good subjects the utmost anxiety and concern.

"We take the liberty to return to your Majesty our most dutiful thanks for those privileges which we enjoy, in common with the rest of your subjects, under your government, by which the honour, commerce, and credit of this nation are so far retrieved and improved, and its security so much advanced; and also for the steps which your Majesty has been pleased to take towards repairing the damages which several of our persuasion suffered by the late *rebellious tumults*, pursuant to the address of the honourable House of Commons, and your Majesty's most gracious answer.

"We unfeignedly wish your Majesty as entire a possession of the hearts of all those of your subjects that have been so unjustly and violently set against you, as your Majesty has of the affections of all our persuasion throughout your dominions. Among us, we know not that you have an open, a secret, or a suspected enemy; nor any, who, notwithstanding what they have suffered from your Majesty's enemies, or the neglect they have hitherto met with from others, (for whose sakes, and with whom they have been always content to suffer,) can be brought to the least degree of indifference, about any thing that concerns your Majesty, your family, or your administration; we reckon it our peculiar glory that, during the late *unnatural rebellion*, there were not any of our principles, who did not express the utmost zeal for suppressing it, in their several stations and capacities.

"Your Majesty's penetration will, we doubt not, easily lead you to discern, that such a body of your faithful subjects deserve to be distinguished in another manner than by marks of infamy. Their consolation is, that they were put under some of them, for what was hoped, at that time, would have been for your service: had your Majesty and the nation found it so, we had been the more easy.

"We think it the particular honour of the protestant Dissenters, that their strict adherence to the interests of your illustrious family *before your Majesty's accession, and their loyalty to it since*, have drawn upon them so much of the fury of some of their fellow-subjects. We are not conscious what else could render us obnoxious to them; our principles being, we hope, the most friendly to mankind, and amounting to no more than that of a *general toleration* of all peaceable subjects, and universal love and charity for all Christians, and to act always in matters of religion as God shall give us light into his will about them.

"We do not so much as expect or desire any thing that ought to give any one the least disturbance; we only wish that,

under your Majesty, as the common prayer of all your loyal people, those of our persuasion might not want a capacity, as we hope your Majesty will find they never want an inclination, to promote the true interest of the protestant religion, and of their country.

"May the great God continue to multiply his blessings upon your Majesty, and every branch of the royal family; and after you have many years ruled faithfully for God on earth, may you reign gloriously with him in heaven."

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

"I THANK YOU FOR YOUR DUTIFUL AND LOYAL ADDRESS; I AM FULLY CONVINCED OF THE LOYALTY AND ZEAL OF THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS; I WILL GIVE ORDER FOR THE SPEEDY PAYMENT OF THE DAMAGES THEY HAVE SUSTAINED IN THE LATE TUMULTS, AND THEY AND YOU SHALL ALWAYS HAVE MY PROTECTION."

That our forefathers were able to assure the monarch, after such a period of national convulsion, and notwithstanding the "marks of infamy," which the parliament had refused to remove from them, that among the whole body of protestant Dissenters, they did not know that his Majesty had one "open, secret, or suspected enemy," was indeed "a matter of peculiar glory," as well as that, during the late unnatural rebellion, there were not any of them who did not express the utmost zeal in suppressing it, in their several stations and capacities. It is probable that this address produced a powerful effect, as we find the attention of government attracted towards their complaints.

At the opening of the Parliament in November, 1717, the King thus powerfully pleaded the cause of his Dissenting subjects. "*I would heartily wish, that at a time when the enemies of our religion are, by all manner of artifices, endeavouring to*

undermine and weaken it both at home and abroad, all those who are friends to our present happy establishment might unanimously concur in some proper method for strengthening the Protestant interest, of which as the Church of England is unquestionably the main support and bulwark, so she will reap the principal benefit of every advantage accruing by the union and mutual charity of all protestants. As none can recommend themselves more effectually to my favour than by a sincere zeal for the just rights of the crown, and the liberties of the people; so I am determined to encourage all those who act agreeably to the constitution of these my kingdoms, and consequently to the principles on which my government is founded."

Encouraged by these declarations of the monarch, the Dissenters throughout the kingdom thought this would be a good opportunity for seeking the repeal of all the invidious acts which were in force against them. But it was soon understood, that the King pressed this affair with his ministers until he was told, by Lord Sunderland, that it would be impracticable, and "that to press the repeal of the Test Act at that time would ruin all." The King in consequence informed Lord Barrington, who was a Dissenter, that "he should have been glad could the whole measure have been carried; but, as he was assured it could not be at that time, he believed the Dissenters were too much his friends to insist upon a thing which might be infinitely prejudicial to him, and which, instead of doing them any service, would only turn to their injury." The Dissenters, finding it to be the wish of the King that they should not petition for the repeal of the Test Act, dropped the design, on being assured it should be repealed at another time.

A bill was brought into the House of Lords on the 13th of December, by Earl Stanhope, and was entitled "An Act for strengthening the Protestant Interest in these Kingdoms." It proposed a repeal of the law against Occasional Conformity and the Growth of Schism, and of some of the clauses in the Test

and Corporation Acts. This measure was strongly opposed by Dr. William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury,* and other pre-

* Dr. Wake, whilst Bishop of Lincoln, had both voted and protested against passing the Schism Bill, in 1714. He was therefore, upon the demise of Dr. Thomas Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury, translated to that Metropolitan see. Bishop Hoadly, in arguing in favour of the repeal, endeavoured to show at large "the unreasonableness and ill policy of imposing religious tests as a qualification for civil and military employments, as abridging the state of the service of many of its best subjects, and exposing its most sacred institutions and ordinances to be abused by profane and irreligious persons." He also laboured to prove that the Occasional and Schism Acts were in effect persecuting laws; and that by admitting the examples of *self-defence* and *self-preservation* in matters of religion, all the persecutions of the heathens against the Christians, and even the popish inquisition, might be justified. As to the power, of which some clergymen appear so fond and so jealous, he owned "that the desire of power and riches is natural to all men; but that he had learned, both from reason and the gospel, that this desire must keep within due bounds, and not intrench upon the rights and liberties of our fellow-creatures and countrymen." This very year Archbishop Wake had entered into a correspondence with Lewis Ellis Dupin, Doctor of Sorbonne, at Paris, and with Quinault and Piers de Girardin, both Doctors also of Sorbonne, concerning a UNION between the two Churches of England and France. "The Regent himself (Duke of Orleans) and Abbot du Bois, Minister of foreign affairs, as also Mr. Joli de Fleury, Attorney-General, gave the line at first, and let things run on to certain lengths. But the Jesuits and Constitutioners rung the alarum-bell, and overturned the whole scheme, by spreading a report that Cardinal de Noailles and his friends the Jansenists were upon the point of making a coalition with the heretics. Hereupon Dr. Piers de Girardin was sent for to Court, and severely reprimanded by Abbot du Bois, and strictly charged, upon pain of being sent to the Bastille, to give up all the letters he had received from the Archbishop of Canterbury, as also a copy of all his own. The Doctor was forced to obey; and all the letters were immediately sent to Rome, as so many trophies gained from the enemies of the church. Abbot du Bois was then in pursuit of a cardinal's cap, which met with some stop at Rome; his discovery of what was in agitation in France, and in concert with whom, is supposed to have con-

lates, and as strongly supported by Dr. Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor, and Dr. Kennett, Bishop of Peterborough. After many struggles, the friends of the bill agreed to leave out the clauses which related to the Test and Corporation Acts; and the bill passed, though not without a violent opposition, and received the royal assent February 18, 1719.*

Mr. Richard Allen, the worthy pastor of the church in Barbican, died February 20, 1717, and Mr. Joseph Burroughs, who had been his assistant in the ministry for about four years, was chosen to succeed him, and was on Wednesday, May 1, publicly ordained as pastor of the church, by laying on of hands. Messrs. Matthew Shelswell and George Reynolds were, at the same time, and in the same manner, appointed to the deacon's office. On this occasion Mr. Foxwell read the third and fourth chapters of the first epistle to Timothy; Mr. Benjamin Stinton preached from Phil. i. 1, from which he explained the offices of pastors and deacons; and Mr. Nathaniel Hodges explained and vindicated the form of ordination, from Titus i. 5. Mr. Stinton then

tributed not a little to removing all difficulties, and to procuring that dignity which he soon after obtained. Thus ended this noble project! His Grace was perfectly sensible that nothing could be done in it without the concurrence of the state, however well disposed the principal men of that church might be towards it. Nevertheless the change of affairs contributed to the reputation of the Archbishop, his letters being admired even by the then Pope Clement XI. who declared, "it was pity the author of such profound letters was not a member of their church!" (See the Archbishop's Life, Biog. Brit. vol. vii. p. 4090.) His biographer adds, "Although we must lament that what was so far happily advanced was thus broken off; yet it must be some pleasure to know, that the way is paved for this arduous, pious, and desirable work, whenever it shall please the Almighty to incline the princes of this world to come into it!"

* Still it was provided that any Mayor, Bailiff, or other magistrate, who should knowingly and willingly attend a conventicle in the gown or ensigns of office, should, on conviction of such offence, be disabled from holding any office or employment in any public office whatever," &c.

called upon the minister and the members of the church to signify, by lifting up their hands, their mutual choice and consent to form this union. Then, after a short prayer, the ministers present laying their right hands upon the head of Mr. Burroughs, Mr. Stinton, in the name of the whole, pronounced the words of ordination as follows :—

"Brother Joseph Burroughs, we do, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the consent of this church, ordain thee, to be an elder, bishop, or overseer of this church of Jesus Christ." Mr. Stinton then, while their hands rested upon the head of Mr. Burroughs, offered a short and appropriate prayer to God for him, and for the church over which he was now the recognised pastor.

After the deacons had been ordained in the same manner, Mr. Abraham Mulliner offered up a prayer for them, and then addressed the church from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. After the sermon he prayed, and when a psalm of thanksgiving had been sung, the assembly was dismissed with one of the apostolical benedictions.*

Mr. Joseph Stokes, of Horsham, a champion for Pædobaptism, who has been already mentioned, published in this year an octavo work, in reply to Dr. Gale's Treatise. It was entitled, "A Compassionate Plea for Infants ; or Remarks on Dr. Gale's Reflections on Mr. Wall's History of Infant Baptism." This book, and his former pamphlet, were answered by a Mr. John Tasker. Mr. Stokes found an able antagonist also in Mr. Thomas Davy, who published a work of 158 pages, dated Leicester, September 29, 1718, entitled "The Baptism of Adult Believers only, asserted and vindicated ; and that of Infants disproved. In which it is shewn, that the people called Anabaptists are of an apostolic original, and not a new upstart sect ;

* From this account, which is given by Crosby with great minuteness, we learn that singing was only attended to at the close of the service.

and that there have been in every age, from Christ and the apostles' time, more or less, a people professing believers' baptism, and rejecting that of infants. With a Postscript, containing some Reflections on Mr. Stokes's Compassionate Plea for Infants; and an Appendix, containing a Discourse upon Acts ii. 47."

This year is memorable in the history of the Baptists for the establishing of the London Fund, for the purpose of assisting necessitous ministers, and for providing education for young men who had been called to the work of the ministry by the churches to which they belonged.

On several former occasions great solicitude had been expressed by ministers and others to provide a public fund, from which necessitous ministers might derive assistance, whose churches did not provide sufficient for their support: but now this desirable object, though attended with considerable obstacles, was effected; and its establishment may be considered as the head of a river, which, having received many additional streams in its course, at present relieves the distresses and gladdens the hearts of many of the faithful ministers of Christ. It may be truly said of this beneficial fund;—*For the administration of this service not only supplieth the wants of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.*

From the minutes of this admirable institution I copy the following "Paper of Proposals for raising a Fund, sent to the several Congregations of Particular Baptists in and about London. —"Whereas several ministers and other persons who have the interest and welfare of the baptized churches in England very much at heart, have observed for some time with great grief and trouble the little correspondence and union that there is between those of that denomination; the great decay of that interest in some parts of England, and the difficulty they have to keep up the public worship of God, with any tolerable reputation, in other parts; the great want of able and well-qualified

persons to defend the truth, and to supply those churches which are in want of ministers; the poverty and distress which some employed in that sacred office are exposed to for want of a competent maintenance for themselves and families; and the frequent applications that are made to some private persons on those occasions, who neither have ability to help all, nor opportunity to inquire into the truth and circumstances of every particular case:—it is therefore proposed and earnestly desired by the said persons, 1. That a public fund or stock be raised to redress these grievances, and more especially for the support and maintenance of honourable ministers, and providing for a succession of such; and that this fund shall be for the use and advantage of those churches only that go under the denomination of Particular Baptists. 2. That it be begun by taking subscriptions, and making a public collection for it in the several congregations of that persuasion, in London, and the parts adjacent; and by the free gift of any particular persons whom God hath blessed with an ability and disposition for such an extensive and pious charity. 3. That as soon as a competent sum be either advanced or subscribed, the ministers and messengers of the several churches concerned, be desired to meet together to agree upon proper methods for the management and future supply thereof. 4. That every church that shall advance fifty pounds or upwards, shall send one messenger, with their elder, for the first year; that every church that shall give one hundred pounds or upwards, shall have the right of sending two messengers beside their elder; and those that give one hundred and fifty pounds, three. 5. That the managers thus chosen and sent by the churches, shall have liberty to invite any other gentlemen who have contributed to this fund to act with them as managers therein, provided they are not members of those churches who are represented by their messengers."

The first meeting, on June 4, 1717, was attended by the elders and managers of six congregations, viz. Tallow-chanders' Hall,

Little Wild-street, Devonshire-square, Cripplegate, Horsely-down, and Flower-de-luce Court. The first of these proposed to raise towards the fund £200; the second, £160; the three next, £150 each, and the last £100. The elders present were, Messrs. John Noble, Mark Key, Benjamin Stinton, John Skepp, Edward Wallin; and the messengers, Eleazer Edwards, Joseph Staples, and Nathaniel Cevile; Samuel Burch, sen. John Taylor, and William Perkins; John Toms, George Richardson, and Samuel Hillier; James Watson and James Kirby; Abraham Atkins, John Valley, and Thomas Hixon; John Coombe and Thomas Wells.

The only difference of opinion which appears to have existed, was upon the subject of the fund being confined to persons of the Particular Baptist persuasion. Mr. Benjamin Stinton was much opposed to that regulation, and wrote a very sensible and candid statement why he objected to such a restriction. He thought it would open a door for endless debates and struggles among the managers, to determine what particular persons should partake of the charity. He stated that there were several ministers and churches of Anti-pædobaptists, who desired not to go under the name either of Generals or Particulars, nor who could be justly classed under those designations. He further urged, that it would expose the Baptists to other denominations of protestant Dissenters, as a people of an uncharitable and party spirit; that the Presbyterians had a fund from which they distributed many hundreds by the year, and extended their aid to Independents and Baptists; and that the Independents had a fund without any such limitations; "but," he adds, "the Baptists by this rule will tie up themselves from helping some of their own denomination, be they in ever so great necessity, or men of ever so much piety and usefulness, and though the managers themselves may then wish they could do it."

Mr. Stinton remarks still further, that the article only guarded against errors of one kind, and not those of another

kind which may be equally dangerous and pernicious. "Whereas," says he, "if orthodoxy is to be the standard for the distribution of this charity, all dangerous errors ought to exclude persons from the benefit of it, as well as some. By Particular Baptists, I suppose to be chiefly intended those that hold the doctrines of *personal election*, and of the *final perseverance of the saints*, according to the *Calvinistical* notion of them; now a man may hold both those truly, and yet at the same time advance principles more dangerous, and destructive of true godliness, than the denial of either; so that this article cannot satisfy any moderate *Calvinist*, unless it be explained to this effect, *that by* Particular Baptists *is intended those that are neither* Arminians, *or* Antinomians."

This worthy minister states also, that the article had given great offence to several worthy and generous gentlemen, whose assistance would be of great service to the public, and was likely to keep several rich and numerous churches from joining in the design. He thought that it would promote disunion and opposition among the Baptists themselves; and that the object aimed at, namely, the prevention of persons who were not *orthodox* in their principles from partaking of the charity, might be effected without such a distinction, as the managers could always use their discretion in receiving or rejecting any case that was presented to them for relief.

There is no information how these objections were replied to. It is probable, however, that even Mr. Stinton ultimately approved of the expediency and lawfulness of the measure, as he immediately became a member of the society. The six congregations brought in their collections, and in August following there had been paid to the treasurer (Mr. Atkins) £874. 14*s*. 6*d*. The congregations of Joiners' Hall, Turners' Hall, John-street, Gravel-lane, (Wapping,) Artillery-street, and Ayliffe-street, were invited to join the fund.

A circumstance occurred at the close of the year 1719, which

throws considerable light upon the tenacity that had been manifested to introduce and retain the article confining the fund to the assistance of those only who avowed themselves to be *Particular* or *Calvinistic* Baptists. Mr. Thomas Hollis, one of the managers, who had been a very liberal benefactor, and whose father, Mr. Thomas Hollis, and brother, Mr. John Hollis, had likewise liberally contributed towards the fund, "proposed that the people at Barbican, under the care of Mr. Burroughs, should be invited into this fund:" this proposal was instantly *negatived*. At the next meeting a letter was presented by Mr. Thomas Hollis, signed by himself and brother, and addressed to "the Ministers and Messengers of the Baptized Churches meeting at Pinners' Hall, London," which was as follows:—

"You have greatly grieved us, and some other brethren, hearty well-wishers to the cause we profess to engage in, by the narrow principles you tied yourselves unto at the last meeting, and particularly refusing our worthy friend and his church, that might be likely to be useful in the pious design.

"We beseech you to reconsider that vote now, or at any other time, before it be confirmed.

"We have in our power £200 of our late honoured father's money, which we are willing to be added to your fund, acquainting you though with the particular regard he had to poor Baptist ministers, whether pastors or teachers, in Wales, that they may be remembered by you now and hereafter in your annual distributions, and that it may be entered in your register.

"When you have considered how it shall be disposed of for an annual improvement, the money is ready to be paid to the treasurer or his order.

Your very loving friends and brethren,

THOMAS HOLLIS,
JOHN HOLLIS."

Minories, February 3, 1718-19.

"The said letter," the minutes add, "was immediately taken into consideration; and touching the clause relating to the agreement made the last day, concerning the church under the care of Mr. Burroughs, it was resolved to abide by the former agreement in that matter, and that the treasurer attend Mr. Hollis, to advise with him how the £200 mentioned in the last letter shall be disposed of."

The congregation in Paul's-alley, notwithstanding the respectability of its amiable, pious, and orthodox pastor, Mr. Burroughs, had long been degenerating into a lax and unscriptural catholicism, undervaluing the importance of the doctrines of the gospel. This they had given full proof of by listening to the anti-evangelical discourses of the Rev. Dr. John Gale. It will be perceived, that it was not so much to guard against general Baptist ministers on account of their *Arminian*, as of their *Arian* and *Socinian* sentiments, which they had been publicly avowing and propagating. Had they admitted the congregation in Barbican, on account of the orthodoxy of its pastor, or of the number and opulence of its members, or of the benevolence of its advocates, they would have broken down a mound, namely, *the agreement of our churches in the confession of faith adopted by the Assembly in* 1689, which had hitherto preserved the Particular Baptist churches from the spreading contagion and corroding gangrene of Socinianism; and it would not have been possible to check the influence of that corrupt and fatal stream, which has spread barrenness and death wherever it has flowed, and which doubtless would have produced the same disasters among the Particular, as it has among the General Baptist churches.

There is every reason for concluding that this arrangement was ultimately approved of even by the Messrs. Hollis themselves, since Mr. John Hollis continued the treasurer of the fund, and both himself and his brother were among its most distinguished supporters.

The managers of the fund were very early convinced that their pious and benevolent efforts were liable to be abused; and that those who had been accustomed to covetous practices would make it an occasion of gratifying their parsimonious disposition. *Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness!* They therefore wrote the following circular letter to counteract so unjust a use of the fund.

"To the Church of Christ at ————, under the care of our honoured brother, Mr. ————,

"*The Elders and Messengers appointed by the Churches to be Managers of the Fund raised at London for the help and support of poor Baptist Ministers, send greeting.*

Honoured and beloved Brethren,

"Your application to us in behalf of your minister gives ground to hope that you are heartily desirous of his having an honourable and comfortable maintenance; and should any, on account of the small present sent him, either slacken their care or lessen their contributions, it would be a very great abuse and perversion of the generosity of others, and no small impediment to the progress of the good work lately begun.

"As our chief designs in this affair are the honour of God, the keeping up of his public worship in several parts of this kingdom, the edification of the churches, and the relief of many poor labourers in the Lord's vineyard; so we think it but reasonable to expect that our brethren in other parts, who are able, should give us their helping hand, at least to do all they can themselves in their own congregations, before they send for the help and bounty of others.

"We have too much reason to fear that there are many in the churches who are shamefully deficient in their duty of contributing to the maintenance of their ministers; some through

a covetous disposition of mind, and others from their having imbibed some mistaken principle.

"As to the former, which we fear is usually the case, we can assure you that the money raised by this fund was not designed, neither will it be given, to excuse or ease such persons; and though at the first distribution from this public stock we could not have so full and particular an account of the state and circumstances of each church as was desired, yet all possible care will be taken in that matter for the future.

"As to the latter, if any among you doubt of the lawfulness or duty of maintaining their ministers, we desire them to consider, that the Lord hath ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel; and that the apostle presseth this duty upon Christians, not only from the command of our Lord, but from the reasonableness and equity of the thing itself: (1 Cor. ix. 11—14:) and for further satisfaction we refer them to a small treatise, recommended to the baptized churches by several elders in the year 1681, entitled, "The Gospel Minister's Maintenance vindicated."

"And now, brethren, we commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them who are sanctified; and subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in the truth and fellowship of the gospel,

Signed,	JOHN NOBLE,	SAMUEL BURCH,
	BENJAMIN STINTON,	ELEAZER EDWARDS,
	JOHN SKEPP,	JOSEPH MATTHEWS,
	JOHN TOMS,	SAMUEL HILLIER."
	JOHN TAYLOR,	

A resolution of the managers that none were eligible to receive assistance from the fund who received more from their congregation than £25 per annum, presents a most affecting

instance of the evils of covetousness, which at that time prevailed in our churches; and it also shows what distress and poverty many of our ministers and their families must have endured, when, either through ignorance or infidelity, the Lord's command, that *they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel,* was so generally disobeyed.*

Another important object contemplated by the supporters of the fund, was the providing for a succession of honourable ministers, by contributing towards their obtaining literary instructions, or by furnishing them with suitable books, to enable them to cultivate their own minds, and thus to make them well-instructed theologians, the better to fit them for filling the pastoral office in the churches.

In the year 1720, the following Report of a committee appointed to consider that subject, was presented to the managers:—

"It being intended and agreed by the first proprietors and contributors to this fund, that a suitable provision should be made, as ability and opportunity presented, for a succession of able and well-qualified ministers of the Particular persuasion; it was therefore thought meet, that a certain sum of the capital stock in the South Sea Company be nominated and assigned to that particular use. And that the annual profits may be disposed according to the real design of the first principal benefactors, it is humbly offered, 1. That none be admitted to share in this beneficence but of the Particular persuasion, and who,

* The first year's distribution of 419*l.* relieved one hundred ministers, ninety in England, and ten in Wales. They were divided into different classes, who received some eight, five, four, three, two, and one pound each. In the first and highest class of recipients is the name of John Gill, of Kettering, at that time in his 20th year. He received the same sum the next year also. His case was introduced by Mr. John Noble, who was a short time afterwards engaged in giving him a charge, at his ordination, over a congregation in London.

having been baptized in water, is joined to a church of that denomination; and hath so far exercised his gift with them, as that they judge he hath promising ministerial abilities, which may deserve the notice and encouragement of this fund, and accordingly is by them recommended as one sound in the faith, and of good conversation. 2. That the person so recommended, before he is admitted to partake of this bounty, shall, if it be judged needful, submit himself to the hearing and examination of a committee of the managers, if in or near London, or to some other proper persons whom they shall desire to that end, if at a distance in the country; that so the Managers may be the better able to judge of the person's capacity to receive education, and what sort of assistance to give him. 3. That none who is thus approved and admitted shall decline or neglect the frequent exercise of his ministerial gifts, but in such an orderly manner as the church to which he relates shall think fit and approve; but none shall be obliged to lay down or quit his secular calling or employment (if he hath any) while he is pursuing his studies by the encouragement and assistance of this fund."

This report being approved, £300 South Sea stock, and the income thereof, were immediately appropriated to that use.

In consequence of this resolution, several young ministers received assistance both in money and books. Among these was Mr. Samuel Wilson, afterwards the respectable pastor of the church in Prescott-street, and Mr. John Gill, who received in the year 1724-5, after he had settled in London, the sum of £17. 10*s*. for that purpose.*

The managers of the fund having been informed, in the year

* This was probably for the purpose of enabling Mr. Gill to purchase the Hebrew Books which had belonged to Mr. John Skepp, deceased; and which his Exposition of the Scriptures prove he turned to so good an account, as to Rabbinical literature.

1722, that a Mr. Meredith had translated Mr. Bunyan's little book, entitled, "Good News to the vilest of Men," into the Welch language, ordered that one hundred copies should be purchased to circulate among the Welch Baptist churches; and in the year 1726, they ordered that some copies of a sermon, published by Mr. David Rees of Limehouse, should be purchased for the same purpose. In this year too they voted four guineas to Mr. John Brine, to enable him to buy the Synopsis.

The small sums annually voted at this period for books, &c. were doubtless of great use, though they were totally insufficient to accomplish the proposed object, to obtain "a succession of able and well-qualified ministers," in relation to literary acquirements. For many years annual exhibitions were granted from this fund to maintain several students at Bristol; and at length the London Education Society was formed, which led, in the year 1810, to the establishment of the Academical Institution at Stepney. The history of both these societies must be deferred till a future volume of our work.

The course of our history has brought us to the year 1719, a period eventful in the history of protestant Dissenters, as in it was held what is known by the designation of the "Salters' Hall conference," which led to consequences that have been destructive to most of the Presbyterian congregations; the ministers of which at that time were the glory of the land.

As the Baptist ministers, from being in connection with the other denominations, were involved in this memorable debate, it will be suitable to the design of our work to introduce a brief history of that which proved so disastrous to the dissenting interest.

The Arian heresy had been revived in England at the beginning of this century by the writings of Emlyn, Clarke, and Whiston. The first flame of angry contention produced by these sentiments amongst Dissenters broke out at Exeter in 1718-19, among the three united presbyterian congregations in that city.

Messrs. Pierce and Hallet, two of the ministers, refused to concur in the usual explication of the doctrine of the Trinity given in the Assembly's Catechism. The neighbouring ministers, who were consulted upon this subject, recommended that Messrs. Pierce and Hallet should be required to subscribe the following article, "That the denying of the true and proper divinity of the Son of God, viz. that he is one God with the Father, is contrary to the doctrine of the holy Scriptures, and the common faith of the reformed churches."

Mr. Pierce told them, he would acknowledge that "Christ and the Father were one, because he said so." Being asked if he would own "they were one God," he answered, "If they would turn to the text where it was said so, he would own it; but he had over and over declared that he would subscribe no religious test that was not expressed in Scripture words."

The Presbyterians at Exeter applied for advice to the general body of Dissenting Ministers of the three denominations in London; and a committee of that body drew up a paper, entitled "Advices for promoting Peace." To deliberate upon this paper, the whole body of ministers were convened to meet at Salter's Hall Meeting-house, February 19, 1718-19.

They met again on Friday, the 24th, and, after warm debating, a question was proposed which led to a division, "Whether a declaration concerning the Trinity should not be inserted in the Paper of Advices." The proposed declaration related to the first of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the 5th and 6th articles of the Assembly's Catechism. To this was subjoined, "We do heartily subscribe to that which is above expressed, as what we believe to be the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, revealed in the Scriptures." These declarations were signed by 77 ministers; and nearly as many refused, and protested against those who signed it.

It is not to be concluded, however, that the non-subscribers were all of them opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, though

some of them were known to be so. The former class objected to the proposed subscription, from an idea that it was an infringement of their Christian liberty, and inconsistent with their principles as protestant Dissenters, to subscribe any test of sentiment not expressed in the words of Scripture.

Among the non-subscribers the most zealous was Dr. Gale, a General Baptist minister. It was probably in reference to the Doctor, that one minister asked, "Whether they came thither to be contradicted by Anabaptist teachers." To whom it was replied, that "the persons they aimed at were not Anabaptist teachers, but Baptist ministers, of which name they were not ashamed; but that the former appellation denoted re-baptism, which they disowned."

For the purpose of ascertaining the sentiments of the Baptists in London at this period, on a subject of such vital importance as the doctrine of the Trinity, the names of the subscribing and non-subscribing ministers are annexed. But it is to be observed, that it by no means follows that their congregations were of the sentiments of their ministers, as they did not act as their representatives, but merely delivered their individual opinions.

Non-subscribing Ministers.

JOHN SAVAGE, Mill-yard.
JOSEPH JENKINS, High-hall.
JOSEPH BURROUGHS, Paul's-alley, Barbican.
BENJAMIN INGRAM, Fair-street, Borough.
JOHN GALE, P. P. Paul's-alley.
NATHANIEL HODGES, Artillery-lane, Spital-fields.
RICHARD PARKES, White-street.
NATHANIEL FOXWELL, Fair-street.
THOMAS RICHARDSON, Joiners' Hall.

Subscribing Ministers.

JOHN SKEPP, Curriers' Hall.
DAVID REES, Limehouse.

JOHN NOBLE, Tallow-chandlers' Hall.
EDWARD WALLIN, Flower-de-luce-court.
THOMAS DEWHURST, Turners' Hall.
MARK KEY, Devonshire-square.
ABR. MULLINER, White's-alley, Moorfields.
JOHN TOMS, Devonshire-square.
JOSEPH MATTHEWS, Cherry-garden.
JOHN SHARPE, Frome, Somerset.

Dr. Watts, Dr. Calamy, Mr. Neal, and others, left the Assembly before the division took place.

That the reader may be in possession of the reasons which the ministers on both sides assigned in vindication of their conduct in respect to subscription or non-subscription, the following brief statement is copied from pamphlets published by themselves.

The non-subscribers say, "We did not think fit to subscribe, because we thought no sufficient reasons were offered for our subscribing. We were pressed to it, that we might clear ourselves from suspicion of Arianism. But as we knew no just grounds of suspicion, much less of any charge against us, we thought it would ill become us so far to indulge an *unreasonable jealousy*, as to take a step of this nature for removing it; especially since doing so would have been inconsistent with one of our *advices*, which we thought necessary to be given, and which was founded upon an *apostolical rule*.* And we see no need of

* The *advice* referred to is the following, founded, as they say, upon the apostolic principle of *mutual forbearance* and *brotherly* love:—"That Christians, especially ministers of the gospel of peace, should on the one hand carefully avoid giving any just occasion of offence, and, on the other, avoid and discountenance all unreasonable jealousy concerning the sentiments and opinions of others, particularly of ministers, and all rash judging of the Christianity and sincerity of their brethren; and promote to their power mutual forbearance and brotherly love, *as far as a just concern for truth and holiness will allow*." The reader will perceive that the *subscribers* were governed by this limiting clause of the *non-subscribers*:

such jealousies; for if we may be suspected of *Arianism*, without having taught any thing like it, and though we have taken all proper occasion to offer our reasons against it, and that not only from the *pulpit*, but some of us from the *press*; we say, if we must be suspected merely because we would not subscribe what our brethren would have us, why may we not be suspected of *hypocrisy* after we have done it, and then pass into the world for *Arians*, and *cheats* into the bargain? We never yet thought *jealousy* and suspicion to be such good-natured things as to be satisfied with a *few good words*."

These ministers did not hereby intimate that such were the sentiments of their brethren towards them, but that such were the inferences that might be drawn from their tenacity for subscribing the proposed articles; for they add, "Though we would not charge our brethren that required our subscription, with a design which any of them do disclaim, yet to us it appeared, and still does appear, to have the *nature of imposition*, which has been the great engine of division among Christians from the beginning, and has done unspeakable mischief to the Christian church."

The subscribers, in justifying their conduct, say, "The great occasion of the subscription is, to bear testimony against the growing error of the present day, which introduces a new doctrine of the sacred *Trinity*; and to distinguish ourselves from those that are gone into it. They will call the *Son*, *God*; and some of them the *Holy Ghost*, *God*;—preach for the true and proper *divinity* of the *one* and the *other*; that is, such a *divinity* as they will call *true* and *proper*, without saying what it is;—profess to believe in the *Son*, and to believe in the *Holy Ghost*, and highly to *love* and to *honour* the *one* and the *other*;—and make

they thought a just concern for truth and holiness demanded from them a declaration of their sentiments, at a time when fundamental doctrines were impugned.

solemn *appeals* to God, and *protestations* to man, of their *sincerity* in all this. And what is all this for? What need of so much ado? Why, only to avoid declaring that the doctrine expressed in those words of the Catechism, namely, that *there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory*,—is what they believe to be the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, revealed in the Scriptures."

The reader should be informed, that the *Arians* had boasted that the more considerable of the Dissenting ministers were of their sentiments; that high-church sermons and pamphlets upbraided the Dissenters without distinction as Anti-trinitarians; and that one of the judges upon the western circuit had taken notice, in his charge to the grand juries, of what was reported of the Dissenters as being gone off from the doctrine of the Trinity, as one of the matters which would belong to their inquiry. And further that Mr. John Sharp, a Baptist Minister from Frome, who attended the conferences at Salters' Hall, said, "that the eyes of all the West of England were upon the ministers of London, to see what they would do in this juncture; that he waited with concern for the result of the debates; and that if they broke up without coming to a declaration of their faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, it would be the greatest blow imaginable to the Dissenting interest in the west country."

It was certainly a very difficult dilemma into which many of these ministers were brought, when their characters as orthodox or heterodox were to be decided by their subscribing or refusing to subscribe human tests, however unexceptionably expressed. Some of them thought that to subscribe what they cordially believed to be the *sense* of the holy Scriptures, was both lawful and highly expedient, where the *words* of Scripture would not decide between those who held different sentiments respecting the meaning of those very words. The non-subscribers say, "We freely declare that we utterly disown the Arian doctrine,

and sincerely believe the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, and the proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, which we apprehend to be clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures." But they add, "the human words, *Trinity* and *proper divinity*, in this declaration, are used only to notify the things we speak of; and we do not presume in the way of *test*, to go into any particular explications of those things, either in our own or other men's words; but for that we refer to the holy Scriptures: whence it may appear, that we take the Scripture account of those things to be the best and fittest we can use on such an occasion."

It should seem that the non-subscribers were imposed upon by the specious sounds of charity and peace, of candour and moderation. Instead of being governed by such considerations at a time when the fundamental doctrines of the gospel were denied, they ought to have imitated the conduct of Paul and Barnabas, who, when sentiments subversive of the doctrine of justification by grace alone were introduced, immediately took a decided part, giving place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with their brethren; and the former of whom, on another occasion, declared, that if an angel from heaven were to preach another gospel he ought to be accursed. It is worthy of observation, as it respects the non-subscribers among the Baptists, that the churches to which they belonged, have become extinct; or, if there are any vestiges of them remaining, those who compose them are found marshalled under the banner of Socinus. The truth of the gospel has not continued with them; and these remarks are applicable to all the Presbyterian churches. It is pleasant also to remark, that most of the Particular Baptist ministers in London were so zealous for the doctrine of the Trinity, and the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus, as to subscribe with their hands what they believed in their hearts; thus contributing to stem the torrent which threatened to deluge the whole of the Dissenting churches. *When the enemy came in like a flood, the Spirit of*

the Lord thus lifted up a standard against him." This, too, was remarkably the case with our churches in the west of England.

By a circular letter of the Western Association which assembled at Trowbridge on May 20, 1719, we learn that none of the associated churches were infected with this pestilential heresy. They say, "We have great cause to rejoice that, in this degenerate state of the churches, the great adversary hath not had so great power as to break in upon and divide any of the churches to which we are related. For to the joy of our souls we find them all in peace among themselves, and some of them rather increasing in their number than declining. And though it is a perilous day, wherein many of other persuasions depart from the faith once delivered to the saints, particularly in that great article of the Christian religion, we mean concerning the Deity of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; denying or calling into question his eternal Godhead; suggesting that he is not of the same nature with the Father,—that he is not supreme God, but a mighty glorious creature, in his divine nature superangelical,—and that the *logos*, or divine nature, in the person of our glorious Redeemer supplied the place of a human soul; which at once takes away, not only his real divinity, but his true humanity;—though it is thus with others, we rejoice that none of the churches, or of the ministers, belonging to this Association, hold any such pernicious doctrines."

It is pleasing to observe, how exceedingly careful our ministers in the West were to preserve their churches from this awful contagion. The Association which met at Tiverton in 1721, determined upon having "A collection of rules prepared for governing the proceedings of this Assembly." The ministers appointed to draw them up, were Messrs. James Murch, James Webb, James Sampson, and Thomas Dunsford. In performing this delicate task, they adhered as closely as possible to the

"Preliminary Articles," by which their most early associations in those parts had been governed.

This paper was presented to the Association held at Frome the following year, 1722, and was adopted, and recommended to all the churches.

By the letter and Breviates of the next General Association, (1723,) it appears, that a variety of opinions prevailed in the churches respecting the proposed regulations; and as some of them had not received a copy, it was determined that each church should be furnished with a copy, having a new recommendation in the following words:—"Which we approve of, and recommend to our several churches for them to ratify if they see fit." The title was altered as follows:—"Preliminary Articles for regulating the proceedings of the yearly Assemblies, or Associations, of Elders and Messengers of the Churches of Christ, baptized on a personal Profession of Faith and Repentance, and holding the Doctrine of the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead; (or, as it may be otherwise expressed, of the Equality of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in Eternity, Power, and Glory;) the Doctrines of Personal Election, and the final Perseverance of the Saints; denying the destructive corrupt Principles of the Arminians, on the one hand, and the Antinomians, on the other, so far as we know them." They also "recommend it to the churches to judge, whether it would not be expedient for them in their future letters to express themselves, in some part or other of them, in terms equivalent to those used in the title to the Preliminaries before mentioned."

By this Association, too, the character of one of their ministers was justified from the charge of having embraced the scheme of Messrs. Pierce and Hallet. They say, "Whereas it has appeared to us by a letter from the church at Bampton, and by a letter from Mr. James Murch himself, pastor of that congregation, that a report had been spread concerning him, that he had

fallen into the scheme commonly called the New, or Arian Scheme, we do hereby declare that we believe the said report to be altogether false and groundless, and that he is sound in the faith."

It will have struck the mind of the intelligent reader, that these ministers seem to have profited by the contentions, confusions, and disorders, which prevailed in the synod at Salters' Hall. They do not require subscriptions to any form of words, much less to articles of faith, expressed in the words taught by man's wisdom: but they at the same time intimate strongly the expediency of the churches expressing themselves in such terms as should prove them to be sound in the faith of three equal Persons in the Unity of the Godhead. As, however, they were aware that the term *person* had been excepted against, as improper for explaining the distinct subsistence of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the divine Unity, they wisely subjoin the meaning which they affix to it in a way which is free from objection. And even this explanation is not recommended as perfectly satisfactory to all; (though I do not see how a Trinitarian could possibly object to such a mode of expression;) and therefore they only suggest the expediency of using those, or terms equivalent. And as there were some that objected to the placing of these at the head of the Letter, as if they were subscribing articles of faith prepared for them by others; the ministers declare, that it would be perfectly satisfactory if they were introduced in the body of the epistle. They say in effect, "Only give us evidence in your collective characters, as churches of Christ, that you are not infected with the New or Arian Scheme, and that is all we require. Let us know that you are sound in the doctrine of the Trinity, and the correspondent doctrines of the distinct and proper divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and we are indifferent as to the terms which you select for expressing those sentiments." Thus while contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, they endea-

voured to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; and by taking heed unto themselves and to their doctrines, they both saved themselves, and those who heard them, from the snares of the destroyer. The following are the names of the pastors and ministers who signed this important letter, the signature of each being in his own hand writing.

EMANUEL GIFFORD,	JOSEPH JEFFRIES,
JOHN SHARPE,	JOHN MARSH,
JOHN WEBB,	NICHOLAS GREEN,
EDWARD EVANS,	FRANCIS RADDON,
BENJAMIN BRITTEN,	JOHN REDE,
DANIEL BEVERSTOCK,	FRANCIS TERRILL,
THOMAS LUCAS,	FRANCIS LAKE,
JOSEPH STENNETT,	JAMES KIDDBE,
ISAAC HANN,	BARNARD FOSKETT,
SAMUEL NEWMAN,	WILLIAM WILKINS,
ZEB. MARSHMAN,	JOHN WILKINS,
MORGAN JOHN,	RICHARD HOOPER,
WILLIAM BAZLEY,	THOMAS JOSLING,
C. BROOKES,	ENOCH WILLIAMS,
HENRY HAWKINS,	JOSIAH WEARE,
ROBERT TROTMAN,	WILLIAM DAVIS,
JOHN CHANNON,	THOMAS JONES.

The following sentiments respecting many of the non-subscribers, are from the pen of Mr. Joseph Stennett, then minister at Exeter, who signed the above letter, and was so situated as to behold the contest to great advantage.—"The simplicity of the gospel, I think, naturally requires and obliges us to make a public and explicit confession, as proper occasions offer, of every doctrine which we believe to be contained in the word of God: without it, no communion can be secured from a mixture of persons of the most corrupt principles that have ever been advanced in the world. If a bare assent to the letter of Scripture were sufficient, without regard had to the sense of it, the belief of transubstan-

tiation itself, and the blasphemies of the Anthropomorphites, would be no bars to religious fellowship. I doubt not, indeed, but many good men, who some years ago refused to join with their brethren in a public subscription to the collective sense of Scripture, with regard to the fundamental principles of Christianity, which were then attacked, were intimidated through an apprehension that, by doing so, they should cast some disgrace upon the letter of Divine Revelation. But surely they little thought that so many of those who, at that time, most strenuously urged this objection, would so soon have ventured to use the letter of it in the manner they have done. They have some of them lived to see, that not a few, who then treated the sound and faithful confessions of their forefathers with great contempt, and represented those who thought themselves obliged to bear their public testimony to the great truths it contained, as no friends to the Bible, have themselves pleaded for the sufficiency of the light of nature without it. And thus men's minds being led off, first from due regard to the sense of the Scriptures, and then to the importance even of the letter, too many have given up good part of their Bibles, and some have renounced and cast contempt upon the whole."*

The year 1722, witnessed a triumph in behalf of the Dissenters. This was the degradation of Dr. Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, who was accused of having entered into a dangerous conspiracy against the person and government of the King. His Majesty had now another opportunity of perceiving the attachment felt for his house and government by the friends of civil and religious liberty. For soon after making a tour through the west of England, he was every where received with the liveliest tokens of esteem and satisfaction.

On this occasion the Dissenting ministers, in London, pre-

* Sermon by the Rev. Joseph Stennett, of Wild-street, entitled, "The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel," p. 16, 17. 1738.

sented the following Address, which was published, with his Majesty's Answer, in the Gazette.

"*St. James's, November* 23.—The following humble Address has been presented to his Majesty by Mr. Matthew Clarke, accompanied by several of his brethren, introduced by the right honourable the Lord Viscount Townshend, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State; and all had the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand.

"To the King's most excellent Majesty.

"*The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster.*

"May it please your Majesty,

"We have so often returned thanks to Almighty God, for your Majesty's peaceable settlement upon the British throne, and so heartily prayed for the continuance of your happy government, that we must of all people have been inconsistent with ourselves, if we had not been very sensibly affected with the kindness of divine Providence, in discovering the evil designs of those who, in defiance of all, even the most sacred engagements, have been, and still are fighting against their own happiness, and striving to make themselves and the whole nation miserable.

"It grieves us that our native country should produce such monsters of ingratitude and perfidiousness. We are at a loss to express how much we abhor their practices; and as for the principles which lead into them, we cannot but account them as foolish as they are impious.

"To imagine that a protestant kingdom should flourish under the influence of popish counsels, or our religious and civil liberties be best secured by sacrificing them to the avowed enemies of both, are absurdities too gross to be digested by any that know the value of either.

"We assure your Majesty that we, as ministers of the gospel of peace, are fully determined always to recommend loyalty and fidelity to your government. And it is no small satisfaction to us, that we are engaged with a people so well disposed in this respect as the protestant Dissenters; of whom we can with safety declare, that in all parts of the kingdom, they adhere inviolably to your Majesty, as their only rightful and lawful sovereign, and are very sensible of the many blessings of your auspicious reign, which is not only just and equal at home, but glorious abroad, through the tender concern which your Majesty, upon all occasions, is pleased to discover for the liberties of Europe, and for our Protestant brethren in foreign parts.

"And we please ourselves with the hopes, that the restless attempts of a disappointed party, to make the country a scene of blood, by bringing in upon us a popish Pretender, will contribute to fixing your Majesty the firmer, if possible, upon the throne, and will endear you the more to all your people, and the better secure to them and their posterity the happy establishment of the Protestant succession.

"Inclination, great Sir, as well as duty, will lead us to continue our ardent prayers, that your Majesty's invaluable life may be long preserved; that your councils may be prospered, to the full detection of the traitorous designs of your enemies, and the strengthening of our common security; and that the crown may flourish, in your Majesty's name, in all succeeding ages.

"HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER.

"I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL AND DUTIFUL ADDRESS. YOUR STEADY AND CONSTANT ADHERENCE AND AFFECTION TO MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT, GIVE YOU A MOST JUST TITLE TO MY PROTECTION, ON WHICH YOU MAY ALWAYS DEPEND."

It was immediately after this that the REGIUM DONUM originated, or the King's gift to necessitous protestant Dissenting ministers. There can be no doubt but George I. impressed

with sentiments of affection towards the Dissenters, who had shown themselves such steady friends to the protestant succession, would have cheerfully repealed, had he not been contravened, every statute which infringed the rights of private judgment, violated the liberty of conscience, and made odious distinctions between one good subject and another. To show the Dissenters, however, a mark of his personal esteem, he ordered five hundred pounds to be presented from his private purse. His predecessor Queen Anne had given a similar mark of her esteem and confidence to Mr. Joseph Stennett, with this difference, that what he received was for his own personal benefit, while this was for general distribution.

As the Baptists have not only shared in this bounty, but, from the death of Dr. Samuel Chandler in 1766, till 1806, a period of forty years, had the warrant from the treasury given to their ministers, I shall give as full an account of this matter as I have been able to collect.

It appears that the persons who were first entrusted with five hundred pounds from the royal purse, for distribution among necessitous Dissenting ministers, knew not to whom they were indebted, nor from what source it was derived. A minister, who wrote from authentic papers, says, "The varied forms of receipts they were to sign from 1722 to 1726, were strangely obscure; and the form in use in the year 1762 was equally mysterious." I have not been able to ascertain who were the first recipients. It is highly probable that Dr. Samuel Chandler*

* Dr. Chandler was well known and much respected by many persons of the highest rank, and, could he have satisfied himself to conform, might have obtained considerable preferment in the church; but he steadily rejected every proposition of that kind. When he was complaining of certain things in the conduct of the Dissenters, which had given him offence, in the hearing of a certain dignitary, the prelate, in a jocose manner, asked him, "Why then, Doctor, do you not leave them?" To which he replied, "Why, my Lord, so I would, if I could find a body of

received the warrant, and that it was under the entire management of himself and his personal friends from the time of George I. during the long reign of George II. and until some time after the commencement of the last reign.*

In 1762 the distributors erected themselves into a society, consisting of six ministers and seven gentlemen, and agreed "that no person shall be deemed a minister of the Three Denominations, or have any share in this charity, who does not apply himself wholly to the work of the ministry; that is, *if he follows a trade.*" This was an unwarrantable stretch of power, unless it can be shown that the "warrant" restricted the use of the money to those ministers who were out of business. Should this work ever be read by any of his Majesty's Ministers who are connected with the Treasury, it may be desirable to inform them, and the writer pledges his ability to make good the statement by abundant evidence, that there are many protestant Dissenting ministers, who, notwithstanding (because they would make the gospel with out charge to a poor people) they do not refuse to "follow a trade," yet apply themselves more fully to the proper work of a minister of the gospel, than many of those who, from being proud of their literary distinctions and their clerical character, have looked down upon their illiterate and lay

worthier people!"—*Wilson's History of Dissenting Churches*, vol. ii. p. 379.

* By a manuscript now before me I find that many of the ministers were much dissatisfied with the manner in which the *Regium Donum* was received and distributed. At a public meeting, held at Salters' Hall, April 6, 1736, the following motion was proposed:—"That the receiving of money from persons in power by Dissenting ministers, and distributing it privately without account, is disapproved by this Assembly." This was got rid of by some one moving the previous question. It was then proposed, "That the names of those ministers might be mentioned, who receive money from men in power;" but this was also evaded by a motion of adjournment.

brethren with supercilious contempt. This obnoxious resolution, however, was passed; and it was also resolved, "that the Chairman of this Society be interchangeably a *gentleman*, and a minister." It is possible, therefore, that the above restriction was suggested by some dissenting *gentleman*, who could not bear to hear of any of their ministers "following a *trade*." It is hoped, when such gentlemen wrote the following *memorandum*, "dined together at the King's Head Tavern, October 16, 1764, and audited part of the accounts," that they did not dine at the expense of the King's bounty "to necessitous Dissenting ministers." If they did, it was an act of positive injustice; as they doubtless spent enough in one *tavern dinner*, to assist the families of several ministers, whose zeal in the cause of their Master had prevented them, even though "following a trade," from providing for them,—whilst the *mere distributors* of his Majesty's bounty were spending in luxury what was kindly intended to supply the necessities of their poorer brethren.*

The distribution of this money has led to many unkind and unjust aspersions respecting the design of the Government in bestowing it, and the political influence it has had upon the spirit of protestant Dissenters. A writer† of our denomination, distinguished for his *sceptical opinions*, in mentioning this subject, exclaims;—"Fatal era! for these protestant Dissent-

* The writer above referred to was the late Rev. John Martin, who, on being deprived of the "warrant," which he had held from the death of Dr. Samuel Stennett, published "A Letter concerning the Regium Donum, addressed to those ministers to whom his Majesty's bounty has been distributed since the death of Dr. Stennett," 1806. p. 5, 6. Mr. Martin had rendered himself obnoxious to his brethren in the ministry by his unkind misrepresentations of their political sentiments. There is no doubt, however, that he distributed this royal bounty with integrity and impartiality.

† The Rev. George Dyer, in his Life of the Rev. Robert Robinson, p. 237, &c. 1796.

ing ministers first became state pensioners and ministerial tools!" Then, I say, if five hundred pounds per annum could purchase all the protestant Dissenting ministers in England, and transform them into "state pensioners and ministerial tools," they were not worth what was paid for them! Too despicable to be feared by any minister of state, too mean to be courted! Surely, even Sir Robert Walpole never made so cheap a purchase, if "every man had his price!"

Neither this writer, nor the writer in the London Magazine of 1774, from whom he quotes, has produced any proof that this sum of money from the treasury has tended to the political degradation of Dissenters; nor indeed could that be done. If it has prevented any of their ministers from interfering with matters of state, or if it has tended to preserve them from the mania of a political spirit, and increased their attention to the affairs of *that kingdom which is not of this world;* then, whatever might be the intention of Sir Robert Walpole, though he might even *mean it for evil, God meant it for good, to save much people alive,* and to preserve them from a corrupt and worldly spirit. It is added;—"Some few years after, for their good services to administration, and to enable them to do more, this sum was increased, and advanced to eight hundred and fifty pounds half yearly. This is the present value (1774) of the treasury warrant; but there are large fees and deductions."*

And this is *still* the value of the royal grant, now called the "Parliamentary Grant," because voted annually by Parliament. But to speak of even this sum, which is divided between the Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist Ministers, as being granted "for their good services to administration,"—to en-

* The *nominal* sum is 850*l.* the *net* sum received is 784*l.* 14*s.*—Vide Mr. Martin's Letter, p. 9.

able them to do more good services as the "price of their liberty;"—"*hush money;*"—an "Achan's wedge in the camp;"—the "means of encouraging separations, and supporting divisions, in city and country;"—and as "having procured the almoners an influence and power both in city and country, that is *dangerous*, and may be *fatal, to the cause at large*, &c."—these are indeed prognostications too ridiculous to be noticed. *Nine almoners* distribute, after "the large fees and deductions," *one hundred and sixty pounds per annum, each.* They must be extremely clever, if, with so small a sum, they have obtained an "influence and power both in city and country, which is dangerous, and may be fatal, to the cause at large." The writer has lived in the city these seventeen years, but he has never known any of these almoners making use of the Regium Donum for procuring influence; and believes that, had they expected any poor minister to barter his independence for four or five pounds once in two or three years, the money would have been indignantly thrown back into their hands; there not being a minister, so far as he knows them, of any of the denominations, who does not act, and who will not act, upon the maxim of the immortal Selden, "ABOVE ALL, LIBERTY!"

In the reign of Queen Anne mention was made of a Society of Calvinistic Baptist Ministers meeting weekly at the Hanover Coffee-house: it is probable that the annual meetings of the Assembly had produced a monthly meeting of the associated churches "for prayer and a sermon," and that most of the churches whose ministers belonged to that Society were united in that monthly Association. I have no evidence when that Society was dissolved, and those monthly meetings discontinued; but at this time a new Society was formed of the most respectable of our pastors in London.

Its origin is thus recorded. "January 20, 1723-24. The Minutes of a Society of Ministers of the Baptist Particular

Persuasion, meeting at the Gloucestershire Coffee-house, on Monday, at three o'clock,* whose names are as follow :—

MR. JOHN NOBLE,	MR. WILLIAM ARNOLD,
—— MARK KEY,	—— CLENDON DAWKES,
—— EDWARD WALLIN,	—— THOMAS RICHARDSON,
—— RICHARD PARKES,	—— HUMPHREY BARROW,
—— DAVID REES,	—— JOHN BIDDLE,
—— EDWARD RIDGEWAY,	—— SAMUEL WILSON, *Sec.*
—— JOHN GILL,	

The business of these meetings at the Coffee-house was conducted with great regularity. They gave their opinion and advice in any matters of difficulty in the churches that were referred to them by both parties; they received applications from country ministers to assist them from the Baptist Fund; they sanctioned and recommended cases of building and repairing meeting-houses in the country to be collected for in London; they watched rigorously over the purity of the members composing the board, whether it related to charges of immoral conduct, or of erroneous principles; they received to their friendship ministers upon their being settled as pastors in the churches, and young ministers who were introduced by the pastors of the respective churches which had called them to the ministry; and they appear to have generally acted in a body in assisting destitute churches, and at the ordination of ministers,—to have very strictly discouraged separations in the churches,—and to have affectionately supported each other against traducers. Instances of each of these particulars could be given: I select one only, which relates to the last-mentioned article.

In the year 1733, an Independent Minister, Mr. John Farmer, (elder brother of the celebrated Hugh Farmer, of Salter's Hall,)

* It was altered to Tuesday afternoons, at 3 o'clock, Sep. 29, 1729.

assistant minister to Mr. Rawlins, at Fetter-lane, and a distinguished Greek scholar, had "reflected in a very unkind and unhandsome manner upon the whole body of the Baptists." On April 17, 1733, it was agreed that the following letter should be sent to the body of Independent Ministers :—

"Reverend Brethren,

"The body of the Baptist Ministers of the Calvinist Persuasion, in and about London, having considered the affair debated in their presence at this Coffee-house, on March 12, 1732-33, (viz. Mr. Farmer's treatment of Mr. Wilson, together with his unkind and unjust reflections on the whole body of the Baptists,) cannot but represent their great uneasiness to you, apprehending that they were not treated with that regard which the nature of the thing called for. Wherefore, in order to maintain that peace and love which have so long subsisted between us, we desire that five or six pastors of your body may be appointed to give a like number of pastors among us a meeting, at such place as you may think proper, that this affair may be amicably adjusted.

We are, Reverend Brethren, with great respect, yours,

JOHN GILL,
JOHN BRINE,
EDWARD WALLIN,
SAMUEL DEW,
WILLIAM ARNOLD,
JOHN TOWNSEND,
SAYER RHUDD,
JOHN RHUDD,
A. GIFFORD, *Secretary.*

"P. S. We desire that Mr. Farmer may be present at the said meeting."

At the next meeting, on April 24, 1733, Messrs. Gill and Arnold reported, that they had carried the fore-mentioned let-

ter, but that there were not ministers enough present to return an answer. "Agreed, that they go again on this day fortnight, and desire an answer."

At the next meeting, May 8, 1733, Messrs. Gill and Arnold reported, that they had been with the brethren of the Independent persuasion, about Mr. Farmer, who returned this answer, viz. "That they disliked and abhorred Mr. Farmer's treatment of Mr. Wilson in particular, and much more his treatment of the Baptists in general; and desire that they would let the affair drop for the sake of peace."

This was very christian-like and noble conduct in the Body of Independent Ministers, and must have operated as a salutary reproof to the unhallowed zeal of Mr. Farmer, who would have called fire from heaven to consume those who followed not with him; and it furnished also a good example of the spirit which ministers ought to manifest towards conscientious Christians, though of another denomination. As a proof that the Baptists entertained no malevolent feelings in their anger with Mr. Farmer, and merely requested a vindication of their character from his "unkind and unhandsome treatment," they immediately and unanimously "agreed to comply with their request."

Another instance of their regard for the purity of religious sentiment occurred in the beginning of the next year, February 1733-4. This was a matter brought before them by one of the associated churches, expressing its disapprobation of Mr. Sayer Rhudd's sentiments respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. That gentleman and his brother being present, and having avowed themselves to be Anti-trinitarians, were requested to withdraw while the ministers were deliberating on the course they ought to take. On their return, they had the following resolution read to them:—"Whereas Mr. Sayer Rhudd and Mr. John Rhudd have this day openly declared that "*the Trinitarian doctrine appears to them to be entirely human, consisting of words and*

phrases of men's own inventing, and which are no where to be met with in Scripture, such as three Persons and one Divine Essence; agreed, *nemine contradicente,* That the said Mr. Sayer Rhudd and Mr. John Rhudd be no longer admitted to sit with us as members of this Society."

The ministers, it will be seen, were not to be imposed upon by this specious representation. They well knew that a *doctrine* may be found in the *Scriptures,* for the sake of correctly stating which, without circumlocution, it may be proper to use a *human* epithet. It would be a great absurdity, because the term *morality* is not to be found in Scripture, for a person to infer that holiness, without which no man shall see God, is not enjoined upon all the subjects of the Divine government. But this absurdity was even exceeded by the Messrs. Rhudd, who, because "*three Persons,*" and "*one in Essence,*" are not scriptural phrases, disbelieved a doctrine which was plainly revealed by our Lord, when he commanded his apostles to baptize those who believed the gospel, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Mr. Crosby, who gives some account of this matter, which he probably had received from Dr. Sayer Rhudd, says, that the ministers, in excluding him from the Board, "did not treat him like a *brother,* a *scholar,* or a *gentleman.*" This may be very true, if it can be proved that there were no other rules which they were bound to observe besides those of kindness and respect. They might perhaps think that it was a case in which, without renouncing their allegiance to Christ, they could not do otherwise than they did. The command is imperative; *a man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.* Titus iii. 10.* They might conclude, that by his having re-

* Dr. James Foster, who borrowed the sentiment from Dr. Whitby, contended, that "he is a heretic who teaches directly contrary to what he inwardly believes;" if so, says the learned Dr. Doddridge, "the truth or

nounced what they considered as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity, he had forfeited his claim to the character of a Christian brother; and that his literature had nothing to do in a question which related to theological error. And as to his character as a gentleman, they measured him by a higher standard, namely, that of a Christian, and finding him deficient, rejected him from a Society, from which he had in fact excluded himself, by having violated its implied fundamental rules, which rules he himself had subscribed when he became a member of the Board. With what consistency could they suffer a person to continue a member of their Society, whom they could not have suffered to preach in their pulpits? or how could they have warned their hearers to beware of the leaven of Socinianism, which is seminal infidelity, had they continued to associate for religious purposes with an avowed Anti-trinitarian?

The early transactions of this Society, for the sake of giving an uninterrupted series, have been recorded in this reign, though some of the events mentioned did not take place till the following.

The pastors of the church in Paul's-alley, Barbican, Mr. Joseph Burroughs and Mr. James Foster, in July, 1725, in concert with some private gentlemen, instituted *The General*

falsehood of his notions will be quite indifferent as to fixing this censure upon him. But Dr. Foster was obliged to allow that there are *fundamental* errors for which, how *sincerely* soever received and maintained, a man ought to be separated from a Christian society." The only question then is, whether denying the doctrine of the Trinity, or the true and proper divinity of Christ, be such errors? They who believe those doctrines consider them in that light, and all who unite themselves with their churches know this to be their sentiment: should persons then, when they give up these important doctrines, complain of being treated with unchristian severity if they are rejected as unfit members?

Baptist Fund, which still exists, and which distributes annually about two hundred pounds. Having been prevented from uniting in the Particular Baptist Fund, from what they considered the narrow and uncatholic principles of the Calvinists, they determined "to extend the aid of their fund to all Ministers who agreed in the practice of baptizing by immersion on a profession of faith, whose exigencies might require it, and who appeared to be sober, pious, and faithful in the discharge of their work." It provided also for "the assistance of pious young men, who wished to obtain education for the work of the Christian ministry; that a succession of able men might not be wanted, as the necessities of the churches might call for their labours."

The year 1726 was a convulsed period, arising from the restless spirit manifested by the tyrant of France to impose upon the nation the popish Pretender.*

The ministers of the Three Denominations seized this opportunity to manifest their affection to the Monarch, and their loyal zeal in defence of Protestantism and liberty. From the London Gazette, of that period, I have copied the following Address with the gracious reply of the King.

"*St. James's, March*, 11, 1725-26. The following humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, has been presented to his Majesty by Mr. Joseph Burroughs, accompanied by several of his brethren, introduced by

* This was announced by the King to his Parliament, January 17, 1726-27. "I have," said his Majesty, "received information, on which I can entirely depend, that the placing the Pretender upon the throne of this kingdom is one of the articles of the secret engagements."—Tindal's Continuation, vol. xxii. book 27. p. 466.

the right honourable the Lord Viscount Townshend, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

"To the King's most excellent Majesty.

"*The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, in and about the cities of London and Westminster.*

"May it please your Majesty,

"With hearts full of duty and of gratitude, for the many inestimable blessings we enjoy under your Majesty's wise and gracious government, we beg leave to express our most hearty concurrence with the rest of your loyal subjects, in a just concern and resentment at the attempts of some foreign powers to violate at once the rights of your Majesty's crown, and the most valuable interests of your people. Not content to impoverish a rich and flourishing nation, by turning the stream of commerce into another channel, or with the demand of places essential to the security of our trade, acquired in a just war, and ascertained to us by solemn treaties, they would add the worst of mischiefs,—the imposition of a popish Pretender.

"This last insult, above all others, raises our just indignation. If ever God, for our sins, should suffer that evil project to take effect, it must entirely reverse all the distinguishing advantages procured to these kingdoms by the glorious Revolution, and since further secured with the expense of so much blood and treasure, and deprive posterity of all the happiness contrived for them by the wise counsels of King William of immortal memory. It must subvert our fundamental laws, which secure the right of your Majesty and your protestant descendants to reign over Britain, as firmly as

they secure to British subjects their private rights. It must therefore inevitably involve us in confusion and ruin; and not affect Britons alone, but the liberties of Europe, and the protestant interest in general; for we are persuaded the conviction is growing universal, that neither the one nor the other of these can subsist without the protestant succession.

"Though events are out of all human reach, yet we cannot but hope, from the watchful care of that Divine Providence which hath so often been exerted in our favour, from the justice of the cause in which we are engaged, from the wise precautions already taken by your Majesty, from the fidelity and steadiness of your counsels, from the zeal of your parliament, and from your great and extensive alliances, that such pernicious designs, instead of being attended with success, will be made to issue in the firmer establishment of your Majesty's throne, and the tranquillity of your people.

"For this we offer up our hearty prayers to the King of kings: and we shall not cease to use our best endeavours to recommend all dutiful and cheerful subjection to your righteous government. And while we are repeating the assurance of our inviolable adherence to your Majesty and your royal house, we believe we speak the sense of all who attend our ministration, who are zealously devoted by principle and affection, as well as by interest, to your person and family.

"May your Majesty, secure of transmitting your crown and glory to your royal progeny, and happy in seeing the confirmed health and prosperity of every branch of your family, long live the arbiter of Europe, the patron of the oppressed every where, and the common father of Protestants: and may yourself enjoy for many years in peace, the blessed consequences of all your royal cares; reigning over a people duly sensible of their own felicity; more reformed from public and threatening vices; and more united than ever, in piety to God, in loyalty to

their Prince, in liberty to serve their country, and in mutual affection one to the other.

"Signed, in the name and by the direction of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations, in the cities of London and Westminster, the 9th of March, 1726, by

"JOSEPH BURROUGHS.

"To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious Answer.

"I THANK YOU FOR THIS DUTIFUL AND LOYAL ADDRESS. THIS SEASONABLE INSTANCE OF YOUR ZEAL FOR MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT, CANNOT BUT BE VERY ACCEPTABLE TO ME, AND YOU MAY DEPEND UPON MY CONSTANT PROTECTION.

"His Majesty was pleased to receive them very graciously, and they all had the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand."

The patriotic Monarch, whose reign we are about to close, died of an apoplexy, at Osnaburg, on Sunday the 11th of June 1727, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. He had reigned justly, in the fear of God. "My maxim," said he, soon after he was raised to the English throne, "is never to abandon my friends, to do justice to all the world, and to fear no man." This was remarkably fulfilled in relation to the protestant Dissenters; the persecuting statutes which had passed in the reign of Anne being repealed by his influence, so that things respecting them were placed upon the same basis on which they had been established by the Act of Toleration; and there can be no doubt that he would have abolished all the tests, so far as they related to them, had not his measures been contravened and counteracted by the intolerance of men, who would have made the excellent bishop Hoadley the victim of their wrath, had not the King restrained their zeal, and checked their malice.

Formed upon the model of William III. the first of our monarchs who understood and supported the doctrine of religious liberty, and who obtained for protestant Dissenters the sanction and protection of law, George I. the founder of the royal dynasty in the House of Hanover, true to the principles which brought him to the throne, continued to the last the decided friend of civil and religious liberty. As the enlightened and firm friend of protestant Dissenters, let our children be taught to venerate the name, and to admire the virtues, of the first monarch of the present royal family, whose principles and government secured to them that inheritance, of which his descendants have, by treading in his steps, proved themselves to be the worthy possessors.

The following description of his character is given by Tindal, who was not remarkably delighted with the Hanoverian succession. "As to his more private virtues, he was of a grave, easy, and calm temper, and generous upon all occasions; and the serenity and benignity of his mind discovered themselves in his countenance, and captivated the love and veneration of all who approached him."

It is not possible to state exactly what was the spiritual condition of our churches at the end of this reign. There is reason to fear that Christians in general were at ease in Zion. The Established Church had become, in a great measure, reconciled to the Dissenters, who, being left at quiet from persecution, appear to have sunk into a state of inanity and supineness. There are no proofs of either ministers or people manifesting any zeal for extending the kingdom of Christ in the world. The most they seem to have expected was, that their little meeting-houses should accommodate those families, who were considered as composing the congregation, and that those should meet for worship undisturbed by the sons of Belial who were without, or by the ministry of the pastor within. The Western Association assembling at Bampton, April 12

and 13, 1726, in their letter to the churches, say, "You will permit us to excite you to get a deep sense of the growing errors and abominations which are at this day in the midst of us, and also the lukewarmness justly complained of among the professing people of God in distinction from others; that you with us may indeed humble your souls greatly, and cry mightily to him, who hath both promised to hear the prayer of the humble, and hath said that the prayer of the upright is his delight. Oh that the Lord may not have occasion to complain, that there are few who stir up themselves to take hold of him!"

CHAP. IV.

REIGN OF GEORGE II.

1727—1760.

GEORGE II. who succeeded his father in the throne, possessed the same noble, patriotic, and protestant principles. The time he had spent in England had even improved those excellent dispositions which he had received from his tutors in Hanover, under the auspices of the founder of the present dynasty, whom he accompanied, when he came to take possession of that dignity to which the nation, from the protestant zeal of William III. and under the special care of a Divine providence, had raised him as the protestant heir of former English monarchs; the popish heirs having been formally and

legally excluded by the power of Parliament, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons, which can do whatever it pleases respecting the government of the country.

The Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, expressed their loyal affection towards the King, and their gratitude to "Him by whom kings reign," by presenting the following Address, printed in the London Gazette.

"*St. James's, July* 4, 1727. The following humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster. This was read by Mr. John Evans, accompanied by some of his brethren, introduced by the Vice Chamberlain Stanhope, in the absence of his Grace the Duke of Grafton, Lord Chamberlain of his Majesty's Household.

"To the King's most excellent Majesty.

"May it please your Majesty,

"Whilst your Majesty's royal declaration so tenderly mentions the unexpected death of your dearest father, all loyal subjects, as becomes their different stations, are mourning the loss of one common father to his people. The protestant Dissenting Ministers can never forget his paternal favours and condescensions. And we beg your Majesty will give us leave, on this great occasion, to show our affecting sense of that awful providence, which hath finished a reign so important and gracious as that of George I. By this mighty stroke the world is bereaved of one of the wisest and best of Princes, and the reformed religion of its chief glory and defence.

"But the immediate and peaceful succession of George II. dries up our tears. A protestant heir thus coming to the throne of his father, is a new blessing to Britain: a Prince who gave the world so early proof of his spirit and courage in the field, who hath shown so much goodness since his abode in this

kingdom, and given us such agreeable pledges of happiness, upon his wearing the imperial crown of these realms. This consideration, with that of a Queen Consort entirely protestant, and universally beloved, fills our hearts with joy that greatly and justly exceeds all our sorrow. By this means the reformed religion gains fresh support and glory; and all transactions for the peace and settlement of Europe proceed with renewed life and vigour. Thus when it pleased Almighty God (by whom kings reign) to inspire your glorious predecessor King William, to lay the foundation of the protestant succession in the illustrious and numerous family of Brunswick, he provided both an effectual relief of our present sorrows, and a lasting guard against future dangers.

"We rejoice in that wise conduct, and those kind disposals of Providence, which have tied up the hands of all declared enemies to your august house; so that they have it not in their power at present by any means to disturb your Majesty's proceedings and our joys: this is such a confirmation of the kingdom in your Majesty's illustrious family, as, we trust, will for ever extinguish their hopes, who have hitherto vainly struggled for a popish Pretender.

"On our parts, we can assure your Majesty of hearts full of love and affection to your person and government. And, as far as it belongs to our stations and characters, we shall not fail to teach the duties owing to crowned heads, and practise them ourselves on every occasion. It is with pleasure we can further assure your Majesty, that the protestant Dissenters, we believe to a man, are of the same loyal sentiments; and we doubt not our continued share in those liberties which your Majesty hath declared most dear to you. We rely upon your princely wisdom and care, to do every thing that may strengthen and unite sincere Christians and protestants; and heartily wish our suffering brethren abroad the same blessings with ourselves.

"We shall not cease to offer up unfeigned and ardent prayers

to Almighty God, that your Majesty may long live the defender of our religion, laws, and liberties, and the succourer of the distressed; that you may be prosperous in perfecting the great work now depending beyond the seas; that decaying piety may revive throughout your own dominions, and an universal probity of manners may be promoted; that, with your royal Consort, you may reign in the hearts of all your subjects, and in your royal issue, may reign from one generation to another; and that all manner of blessings may be multiplied on the house, person, and administration of your sacred Majesty.

"To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return this gracious Answer.

"I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL AND AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS. YOU MAY BE ASSURED OF MY PROTECTION, AND OF MY CARE AND ATTENTION TO SUPPORT THE PROTESTANT INTEREST.

"His Majesty was pleased to receive them very graciously, and they had all the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand.

"Afterwards they were introduced to her Majesty, by the Right Honourable the Earl of Grantham, Lord Chamberlain of her Majesty's Household; when Dr. Edmund Calamy spoke to her Majesty as follows:

"May it please your Majesty,

"WE cheerfully embrace the opportunity that presents itself, of expressing our duty to your Majesty, encouraged by the conjunction of goodness with greatness, and that commanding air of life and sweetness, that animates all who have the honour to approach you.

"We sincerely congratulate your ascending the throne, which we hope will prove easy, being adorned with those noble virtues, and particularly with that benevolence to mankind, which are so conspicuous in your Majesty.

"When a regard to religion could prevail with a Princess of of your high birth, even in the earliest part of your life, to slight the prospect of a crown, which had visible danger to conscience attending it; that kind heaven at length should reach you forth another, as remarkable for its safety as its glory, is such a return of Divine Providence, as we cannot but admire with great thankfulness, though without the least surprise; since HE whose kingdom ruleth over all, has fixed it as a standing measure of his government, that such as honour him, he will honour.

"May your Majesty's happiness be lasting, and your name ever carry a lasting sound to every British ear; may both your Majesties have a yearly accession to new glories and comforts; may your royal offspring, educated with so much care, and of whom we have such raised expectations, prove eminent blessings to the reformed churches both at home and abroad; and may an infinitely nobler crown than this earth can afford, and that will never be laid down, be added hereafter by the same Almighty Hand, by which your Majesty has been so remarkably distinguished hitherto.

"These, Madam, are, and will be the ardent prayer of the protestant Dissenters, who having nothing more at heart than the continuance and advancement of piety, truth, and love, loyalty, liberty, and prosperity, promise themselves your Majesty's countenance and protection.

"Her Majesty was pleased to give them a very gracious Answer; and they all had the honour to kiss her Majesty's hand."

The King had soon an opportunity afforded him of proving the sincerity of his royal declaration: for though time had removed many of the Jacobites, and self-love and posts of honour had converted others to more moderate principles; or, at least, had led them to adopt a more prudent line of conduct in submitting to a wise and just government; yet, the spirit of the

divine right of kings and priests sometimes stalked abroad terrifying, if not injuring, the peaceable protestant Dissenters.

The candour, and learning, and talents of a Doddridge, one would have thought, might have disarmed even the serpent of intolerance of its venomous sting: but there are persons whom no kindness can subdue, whom no excellency can win. This was the case with some of the established clergy in the neighbourhood of Northampton, who were not able to behold the existence of a Dissenting academy. Knowing there was an obsolete Act on the statute book respecting schoolmasters, (the 13th of Charles II.) which the Toleration Act had not noticed; they resolved to commence a prosecution to enforce the penalties of that Act against this pious and disinterested man, who had not envied them their clerical distinctions, nor wished to possess their emoluments. This being made known to the King, he instantly put a stop to it by an exercise of the prerogative, declaring that "THERE SHOULD BE NO PERSECUTION FOR THE SAKE OF CONSCIENCE DURING HIS REIGN."*

The apathy and indifference to serious religion which prevailed at this period, evinced a most lamentable state of irreligion. Nor was this wonderful, when the entire body of the established church expended all their zeal in pleading for the observance of mere ceremonies, and in delivering dry ethical essays, which they called sermons; but which might have been composed had there been no New Testament, as they were totally destitute of every doctrine connected with Jesus Christ,

* This circumstance is mentioned in "Orton's Life of Doddridge." The Rev. Thomas Tayler, formerly pastor of the Presbyterian church in Carter-lane, Doctors' Commons, has lately informed the writer, that he spent a year in the house of Dr. Doddridge, at Northampton, previously to his coming to London in the year 1760; and that he had heard from the family that there were *several instances* in which the King had issued a *nolo prosequi* for the protection of this defenceless Non-conformist minister.

and him crucified. Under such a ministry the hardened sinner becomes more callous to the convictions of conscience; and the pious believer, if such a one is ever found there, proves the truth of the poet's remark,

"The hungry sheep look up and are not fed."

In such places, too, we may be certain that the great bulk of the inhabitants of parishes will be *absenters*, even though they are not *Dissenters* from the Established Church.

Though there is reason to fear that the churches of the Baptist Denomination were far from a state of spiritual prosperity, yet, there was a goodly number of ministers among them, both in London and the country, that maintained the doctrines of the gospel, and aimed to promote pure and undefiled religion among their people.

An extract from the Circular Letter of the Western Association, assembled at Trowbridge, May 21 and 22, 1730, will serve to supply the want of other information on this subject.

"From some of the churches," say they, "we have received accounts of considerable additions made to their numbers in the year past. These are blessings that call for our thankful acknowledgments, and in which we do, and ought to rejoice; and we doubt not but you will rejoice with us; especially, when to this we add that peace from abroad, as well as among ourselves, which we enjoy; and the great freedom we have of serving God according to our consciences, and the great plenty of the means of grace which abounds among us. These, beloved brethren, are things which our forefathers desired to see, but saw them not; and to hear, but heard them not. How great, therefore, are our obligations to the distinguishing goodness of God, who has brought us forth in the days of light and liberty, and cast our lines in so pleasant a place, and given us so goodly an heritage. But then, on the other hand, how much is it to be lamented that all this goodness should have so little

effect upon us; and that under all these favours of providence and expressions of divine grace, we remain so barren and unprofitable as we do! Several letters we have received, complain of the decay of spiritual religion; and we greatly fear there is much ground and reason for these complaints, and that these are not merely words of course. We hope, therefore, beloved brethren, you will bear with us if we express our fears and concern for you, and our desires for your welfare, in words of counsel and exhortation with regard to the best means of reviving decayed religion: for to write the same things to you, which we have formerly written, to us will not be grievous; but for you it is safe.

Signed, JOSEPH JEFFRIES, Moderator,
and sixteen others.

The Dissenting ministers in London had frequently united, as we have seen, in declaring their sentiments of loyalty to the family of Brunswick; but they had not till this period formed any *Society* for the purpose of mutual consultation and co-operation. Immediately after they had presented the Address on his Majesty's accession to the throne, they held a general meeting of the Three Denominations, at the George, in Ironmonger-lane, July 11, 1727; at which meeting several resolutions were unanimously adopted, which formed into a body all approved ministers, whether Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists, living within ten miles of the cities of London and Westminster. They also agreed, that a committee should be chosen to manage the affairs of the general Body, consisting of *seven* Presbyterians, *six* Independents, and *six* Baptists: these were to agree upon the persons who were to form the Society, and to call the whole Body together when there should appear to them an occasion for their assembling.

The first members of the committee appointed for the Baptists, were the Rev. John Noble, Joseph Burroughs, Dr. Kinch,

Thomas Richardson, Thomas Harrison, and David Rees. The number of approved Baptist ministers amounted to forty-five; of Independents, to forty-nine; and of Presbyterians, to seventy-three.

The Committee soon found an opportunity of exerting itself for the benefit of their brethren in Ireland. At a meeting held at Founders' Hall, April 8, 1728, Mr. John Noble in the chair, it was reported that a bill had been transmitted from the Parliament of Ireland, containing a clause, which it was thought would be injurious to the Dissenting interest of that kingdom. Measures were immediately adopted to prevent the bill from passing here; and at a subsequent meeting, held at the same place, July 8, it was reported that, upon the application which had been made, the clause excepted against had been entirely erased by the King and Council.

At an extraordinary meeting of the Committee held at North's Coffee House, December 11, in this year, Mr. Noble in the chair, it was proposed, on account of the happy arrival of the Prince [Frederick] in this kingdom, that seven persons should wait upon his Royal Highness the next morning. Dr. Calamy was desired to deliver the Address, and the ministers agreed to go to St. James's, "with their usual ministerial habits, as cloaks," &c. The Baptists were Dr. Kinch and Mr. Richardson. They were introduced by the Gentleman of his Royal Highness's bed-chamber, Lord George Cavendish, and had the honour to kiss his Royal Highness's hand. It appears, however, that the general Body thought the Committee had overstepped their instructions, as they resolved at their next annual meeting at Salters' Hall, "that the Committee shall have no power to present any Address, or make any compliment, in the name of the Body, to the throne, or to any of the royal family, upon any occasion, without first calling together the whole body."

Hitherto the Committee had confined its attention simply to public and political matters; but in October 1729 they agreed,

"that, in consideration of the visible decay of serious and practical religion, it should be recommended to the ministers of their several denominations to preach on the subject of public worship; and that the second Lord's-day in the ensuing February, would be a proper time to commence preaching on that subject." They agreed also to consult their brethren of their respective denominations "concerning the expediency of appointing hours of prayer, upon occasion of the visible decay of serious practical religion." This pious project, however, failed on some account, which is not mentioned; it being reported at the next meeting, "that their brethren could not at present agree upon the measure of appointing hours of prayer in concert, upon that account." From this time the ministers do not appear to have attempted the promotion of any devotional object, but to have confined their co-operation to those political circumstances which were considered to affect their interests as protestant Dissenters.

The Deputies for defending the civil rights of Dissenters originated in this Society, towards the close of the year 1732. It was agreed by the general body of ministers, October 3, "that the civil affairs relating to the general interest should be referred to gentlemen." In consequence of this resolution, a meeting was held at the meeting-house in Silver-street, November 29, Mr. Holden in the chair; when the gentlemen who were appointed a Committee, were instructed to report their opinion to two persons, chosen out of each Dissenting congregation, by the subscribers, within ten miles of London. This being reported by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Chandler, secretary to the ministers, at their general meeting, December 5, they agreed "to comply with the request of the Committee of gentlemen."

The Society of Ministers of the Three Denominations, in the year 1736, first assembled at Dr. Williams's Library, Red Cross-street; where they have continued to hold their meetings

ever since, by the consent, annually given, of the trustees of that property.

The Dissenting churches in London, of the different denominations, were at this period desirous of co-operating in works of Christian benevolence; and it is a gratifying employment for the historian to record the origin of a Society, which, at that time, united the hearts and hands of liberal Dissenters; and which has ever since proved not only a bond of union among them, but, by sending forth refreshing streams of comfort, has caused the hearts of thousands of widows to sing for joy.

The smallness of the salaries which Dissenting ministers in general receive for their ministerial labours, renders it impossible for them to lay up for their widows and children, who, therefore, in the event of their deaths, are often left in the most afflictive circumstances. The congregations, too, which are thus left destitute, often experience great difficulty in supporting the public ministry, and, from being compelled to obtain an immediate successor in the pastoral office, are put to so great an expense, that they cannot extend any aid to the family of their deceased pastor, however desirous they may be of doing so.

Many of these worthy and destitute females were in possession, at the time of their marriage, of independent fortunes, which were afterwards gradually consumed in supplying the necessities of their families, and in obtaining education for their children; and all of them, by their industry, frugality, and prudence, contributed essentially towards the prosperity of the congregations, whom their affectionate and disinterested husbands served; and had therefore a claim upon the esteem and the gratitude of the Dissenting body. This claim was founded, not only upon the *charity* which should be shown towards those *who are widows indeed, desolate, yet trusting in God;* but also upon the *justice* of those who had been benefited by the united services of their husbands and themselves, in spending and being spent for the welfare of the church.

Considerations of this nature, induced the Rev. Dr. Chandler, pastor of the Presbyterian congregation in the Old Jewry, in the year 1733, to propose the establishment of a Widows' Fund; "the benefits of which should extend to the families of such ministers of Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist Denominations, as at their death stood accepted and approved as such by the Body of Ministers of the denomination to which they respectively belonged, and died so poor as not to leave their widows and children a sufficient subsistence."*

The rules and orders of this Society were agreed upon March 5, 1733. The union and liberality which existed among the founders of this excellent charity may be judged of from the following resolution. "That the widows and children of such ministers, dying in such circumstances as this Society shall judge necessitous, are to be relieved without making any difference on account of their going under the denomination of Presbyterians, Independents, or Baptists."

The Society was to be governed by twenty-four Managers annually chosen; amongst whom there were always to be some of each denomination.

The annual sum granted was, to English widows £5, and to Welsh widows £3, each. For putting out an orphan appren-

* Mr. Wilson, in his account of Dr. Samuel Chandler, says, vol. ii. p. 379, "As he was a man of the strictest honour and integrity, so he possessed no small share of benevolence. The plan of that noble Fund, which has proved so happy a source of relief to the widows of poor Dissenting ministers, originated with him; and a considerable part of the sum first subscribed towards it, was procured through his interest with persons of opulence. One singular circumstance relating to this fund, which is to be ascribed to his management, is, that the direction of the business is in the hands of lay gentlemen only. This institution, alone, ought to perpetuate Dr. Chandler's name with respect to future generations." Since this was written, some ministers are added to the Committee.

tice they allowed £10; or, if going out to service was preferred, they gave for clothes £5.

The amount of the first property that was funded for these purposes, was £1626. 14*s.*

It was agreed that an annual collection sermon should be preached at the Old Jewry Meeting. The first sermon was delivered by Mr. Chandler, in 1736; after which they collected £134. 14*s.* 8½*d.*: and what was afterwards given made it amount to £163. 19*s.* 8½*d.*

The annual sums voted to widows were not altered till the year 1766. Upwards of 150 persons were then assisted annually, and £900 distributed. Their names were then entered without being classed, as has been the custom of late years, under the distinctive denominations to which their deceased husbands belonged.

The sermons have been always preached by ministers alternately of each denomination. The Baptist ministers employed between 1733 and 1760, were Messrs. Samuel Wilson, Joseph Burroughs, Joseph Stennett, Robert Cornthwaite, Charles Bulkley, and John Brine.*

At the time this Society was formed, infidelity prevailed in the nation to so great a degree, that the hearts of many trembled for the ark of God. They considered that as, on the one hand, fatal errors had never been propagated with greater zeal by the enemies of the gospel; so, on the other, there never had been more lukewarmness and indifference respecting the state of the church among its professed friends. Mr. James Foster, and others, had contended for the sufficiency of reason to decide upon the doctrines of reve-

* The number of widows relieved in the year 1820, was 182;—viz. Presbyterians, 36; Independents, 46; Baptists, 72; Welch widows, not distinguished by their denominations, 28. Some of these have received from this bounty for nearly 40 years.

lation, and even to reject those which were, if not incompatible with reason, yet much beyond the ability of corrupted reason to comprehend, or of a depraved heart to approve. For the purpose of counteracting these errors among professed Christians, a weekly evening lecture was instituted at the meeting-house in Paved-alley, Lime-street, and *nine* of the London ministers were appointed to preach it. Two of these were Baptists; Messrs. John Gill and Samuel Wilson: seven were Independents; Messrs. Thomas Bradbury, Robert Bragge, Peter Goodwin, Thomas Hall, John Merrion, John Sladen, and Abraham Taylor. The lecture commenced November 12, 1730, and was continued till April 8, 1731. The sermons, which were upon the most important subjects of Christianity, were published, in two octavo volumes, in June, 1732.

This union of the Baptist ministers with the Independents turned out very unpleasantly for Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Gill, and must have produced an unfavourable impression upon the public mind. What is here alluded to, arose from the following circumstance: Messrs. Taylor, Gill, and some others of the lecturers, agreed in preparing their sermons for the press, to read them over in company with each other, for the purpose of rendering mutual assistance; and to suggest alterations, or improvements, should that appear to be necessary. Mr. Gill had observed in Mr. Taylor's sermons, when delivered from the pulpit, some passages which he considered as contrary to truth, and as calculated to offend many pious persons; he therefore resolved, when the sermons* should be read privately, that he would point out those exceptionable passages, and suggest such an alteration of them as should render them agreeable to his own view of revealed truth. When the sermons were read from the manuscript copy, those objectionable passages, to the great satisfaction of Mr. Gill, did not appear, from which he inferred

* Each minister preached two or more sermons.

that Mr. Taylor had himself discovered their incorrectness. When, however, the volumes were published, he not only found these passages printed, but, as he thought, with additional severity. The object of them was to censure the doctrines of *God's everlasting love to the elect, their eternal union with Christ,* &c. Mr. Gill, therefore, considered himself as called upon to address a printed letter to Mr. Taylor, in which he defended these doctrines, which, according to his view of things, had not only been vehemently but grossly misrepresented and reproached, Mr. Taylor having called them "immoral conceits," and having styled those who preached them, "ignorant enthusiastic preachers." Though Mr. Gill's letter was thought by persons in general to be written with great respect, temper, and candour, yet his defending the doctrines which Mr. Taylor had opposed, excited the charge of *Antinomianism* against him, and exposed him to much contumely and reproach.

Six years after this Mr. (who had then become Dr.) Taylor resumed the controversy, by calling Dr. Gill's sentiments on those subjects "a filthy dream,—an extravagant position,—a dangerous tenet, big with absurdity,—a rude, ignorant, horrible blasphemy,—invented by one of the vilest and lewdest heretics,—and an Antinomian paradox." Mr. Gill replied with more warmth than he afterwards attempted to justify, acknowledging, "that he had said some things in the heat of controversy, which, though they were consistent with truth, were not agreeable to his natural inclination." It is certain that Dr. Taylor had highly provoked Mr. Gill, and had employed terms and innuendos which no station, however eminent, nor any diploma, however honourable, could warrant him to use.*

* The following anecdote was related by the late Mr. John Ryland to the Rev. Mr. Toplady. When Dr. Gill first wrote against Dr. Abraham Taylor, some of the friends of the latter called on Dr. Gill to dissuade him from proceeding, telling him that he would lose the esteem, *and the sub-*

The reader will now be led to the perusal of a narration relating to a very different subject than angry theological controversy.

The management of the public affairs of the Dissenters appear to have been left principally to the ministers up to this period, (1732.) In 1714, when the Schism Bill was pending, they had called the whole body together; and in the year 1717 they had been assisted by some lay-gentlemen* of each denomination. But as it was now thought desirable to make a direct application to the legislature for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, the Rev. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Chandler, who was the Secretary of the General Body, was desired to summon, November 9, 1732, some of the leading laymen among the Dissenters. Among these was Lord Barrington, who had before assisted them,† and several others; the meeting was held at the Meeting-house, Silver-street, London. Without noticing all the circumstances which took place upon this occasion, it is sufficient for the purpose of history to remark, that a Committee of twenty-one persons was appointed to consider, and report at a subsequent meeting, when and in what manner it would be proper to make the proposed application to Parliament. Another general meeting being held on the 29th of the same month, the Committee reported, that they had consulted many persons of consequence in the State; that

scription of some wealthy persons, who were Dr. Taylor's friends. "*Don't tell me of losing*," replied Dr. Gill, "*I value nothing in comparison with Gospel truths;* I AM NOT AFRAID TO BE POOR."

* The author uses this term, not because he wishes Dissenting ministers to be called *the Clergy*, but because it has become *technical*, as applied to the Deputies appointed to protect the civil rights of Dissenters.

† This Noble Lord was the father of the present Bishop of Durham, and of the late Admiral, and Judge, of the same name. Titles of rank, and connections with the State, have generally destroyed persons as protestant Dissenters.

they found every reason to believe such an application would not then be successful; and that therefore they did not think it advisable to make the attempt. This report was not very cordially received. The Committee was enlarged by the addition of four other persons, and was instructed to reconsider the subject. It was also resolved, that each congregation of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, in and within ten miles of London, should be applied to upon the subject. It was accordingly reported to each congregation, that "the Body of Dissenters had met to consider what methods were proper to be taken at the present juncture, in order to apply for a repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts; and that they had agreed that *two* Deputies from every congregation should receive the report of the Committee to whom that affair was referred. An assembly of the Deputies thus appointed was held on the 29th of December. It soon became evident, though they could obtain no encouragement respecting the particular object for which they were appointed, that there were things constantly taking place which made such a body of lay-gentlemen necessary; and therefore, at a general meeting of the Deputies held at Salters'-hall Meeting-house, on January 14, 1735-36, it was resolved, "That there should be an annual choice of Deputies to take care of the civil affairs of Dissenters." For the purpose of carrying the resolution into effect, it was further resolved, "That the chairman do write to the ministers of the several congregations, some convenient time before the second Wednesday in January next, to return the list of Deputies to him fourteen days before that day." On January 12, 1736-37, Dr. Benjamin Avery, who had been minister of the Presbyterian congregation in Bartholomew Close, but was now practising as a physician, was chosen chairman, which office he filled with reputation, for twenty-seven years, until his death in 1764.

In 1738 the DEPUTIES, as we must henceforth call them, having determined to renew their application to the legislature,

prepared and printed a paper, explanatory of their views and feelings on the subject of the test laws.

This was entitled, "Reasons for repealing or explaining so much of the Corporation and Test Acts, as relates to the taking the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a qualification for office." Two or three extracts will be sufficient for our purpose. They say, "The protestant Dissenters can and do readily take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy required by these Acts; but some of them scruple receiving the sacrament after the manner of the Church of England; and many of them refuse to take the sacrament, after the manner of any church, as a qualification for office.

"The TEST ACT was designed wholly against POPISH RECUSANTS, as the title shows. At that time the nation thought itself in danger of popery, from the Prince on the throne, and the presumptive heir. The receiving the sacrament, according to the usage of the Church of England, was then thought some security. But when circumstances are so much varied, and we have a Prince on the throne, and the succession fixed in a house, zealously concerned to support the protestant religion, surely such a provision can no longer be thought necessary.

"The Dissenters, from their zeal against popery, and fearing lest the Papists should have made any advantage of their refusal or opposition, generously acquiesced in having this restraint laid upon them, not doubting but such disinterested conduct would, in gratitude, justice, and good policy, have long since entitled them to relief."

They conclude by saying, "It is therefore humbly hoped, that those clauses of these Acts, which require the taking the sacrament as a qualification for office, will be repealed, or so explained, as may be necessary to give relief in the premises.*

* Sketch of the History and Proceedings of the Deputies, p. 9, 10.

After these "Reasons" had been circulated among the members of parliament, a motion was made in the House of Commons for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the *Test Act*, as obliges all persons, who are admitted to any office, civil or military, to receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper within a time limited by the said Act. A long debate ensued; and the motion was rejected by a majority of 188 to 89.

The reader will perceive that this application related merely to the *sacramental test*. They properly stated, that the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ, "only for religious purposes;" adding, "that the using of it for civil offices, seems, in a great measure, to have occasioned that disregard and contempt of this institution in particular, and of religion in general, of which all good men have so long and so justly complained."

The petitioning Dissenters were doubtless anxious to be rendered eligible to hold offices in corporations, &c. And therefore they stated, that there was nothing in their principles to render them unworthy of the trust by the government; further adding, that the framers of the obnoxious Acts did not contemplate the exclusion of Protestant Dissenters, but merely of Popish Recusants.

But even this concession could not be obtained from the enemies of Dissenters: they chose rather to let the disgraceful and impious enactment remain upon the statute book, that any person who should accept any civil or military office, should also be compelled to insult the Majesty of heaven and earth by eating bread and drinking wine, not in remembrance of HIM by whom it was appointed merely for spiritual purposes, but in compliance with an Act of Parliament, which had been found convenient, for the purpose of exclusively increasing the wealth and power of that religious sect which was chartered and endowed by the State.

In the year 1733, Mr. John Hollis, a Baptist member of the church in Pinners' Hall, left to the poor of several Baptist churches *eleven hundred pounds*, New South-sea Annuities, and gave in his Will the following instructions for its distribution, &c.

"Goodman's-fields, March 21, 1733.

"*To the Ministers and Messengers of the Particular Baptist Fund, who meet at Pinners' Hall.*

"Whereas, by my Will of this date, I have given to my Son Isaac Hollis eleven hundred pounds, New South-sea Annuity Stock, in trust for such uses as I should by writing under my hand direct and appoint;—now I have ordered and appointed him, by writing under my hand of this date, to transfer the said eleven hundred pounds Annuity Stock to the Treasurer, or Treasurers, of the Particular Baptist Fund, in trust, for the Ministers and Messengers of the said Fund, for them to dispose of as I should direct and appoint. Now I do desire the Ministers and Messengers of the aforesaid Fund, to take a Defeasance from the Treasurer, or Treasurers, for the said eleven hundred pounds Stock, in like manner as they do for the Fund Stock.

"Now my will is, that you dispose of the produce of this eleven hundred pounds New South-sea Annuity Stock, in manner following, viz.

"The produce of one thousand pounds of the said Stock, you shall distribute yearly to the Deacons of the several Churches hereafter named, in the month of February, or March: and my will is, that the said Deacons distribute the said money amongst the Poor of their Churches immediately, in the same manner as they used to do in my lifetime.

"The remaining one hundred pounds Annuity's produce, my will is, that the Secretary have twenty shillings a year for his keeping account in the Fund-book, of the receipts and payments

of this my Legacy: and the remaining three pounds of the produce of the one hundred pounds Annuity, I give to be spent by you in a dinner, every year.

"My will further is, that if any of the said Churches should come to be dissolved, then their part or share in this my Legacy shall be given to the Deacons of the other remaining Churches, for them to distribute to their poor. And if the Dividend of the Annuity should be lessened, then the Legacies to the several Churches' poor must be reduced in proportion.

"And I do desire, that this my Order and Appointment be entered in your Fund-book, to remain and abide as a standing rule for the disposal of this my Legacy.

	£.	s.	d.	
"1. To the Deacons of Mr. DEW'S Church, I appoint	4	0	0	*per ann.*
2. To the Deacons of the late Mr. WALLIN'S Church	4	0	0	
3. To the Deacons of the late Mr. RHUDD'S, now Mr. BRATHWAIT'S Church	4	0	0	
4. To the Deacons of the late Mr. RICHARDSON'S Church	4	0	0	
5. To the Deacons of Mr. BRINE'S Church	4	0	0	
6. To the Deacons of Mr. GIFFORD'S Church	4	0	0	
7. To the Deacons of Mr. ARNOLD'S Church	4	0	0	
8. To the Deacons of Mr. REES'S Church	4	0	0	
9. To the Deacons of Mr. GILL'S Church	4	0	0	
10. To the Deacons of Mr. WILSON'S Church	4	0	0	
To the Secretary	1	0	0	
To the Ministers and Messengers of the Fund, for a Dinner	3	0	0	

Witness my hand the day and year above written,

JOHN HOLLIS."

The Deacons of each church, when they received this money during Mr. Hollis's lifetime, gave a receipt for the same, to be

distributed to the Poor of the several Churches, over and above the usual allowance made to them by these Churches. After his death, the receipt was given to one of the Treasurers of the Baptist Fund.

Some further particulars of this benevolent man, and of others of the Hollis family, have been already given in our history of the Baptist Fund.

In the year 1735, the nation was under a considerable alarm concerning the increase of Popery. For the purpose of counteracting it, a morning week-day lecture was established at Salters' Hall, and twelve of the most eminent London ministers were selected to preach a course of sermons against the principal errors of the church of Rome. Ten of these were Presbyterians, one an Independent, and Mr. Joseph Burroughs was a Baptist.

After these sermons had been preached and published, Mr. Grantham Killingworth, physician at Norwich, and a general Baptist, published what he entitled, "A Supplement to the Sermons lately preached at Salters' Hall against Popery, containing just and useful remarks on another GREAT CORRUPTION therein omitted."* The design of this writer is thus frankly declared. "Having read over the sermons preached at Salters' Hall against *Popery*, as they came out, I was very much pleased to observe that, generally speaking, they were judicious and well composed; the arguments urged against the Romanists strong, and, as I am fully persuaded, really unanswerable. But then, at the same time, I could not help taking notice, that those arguments bear full as hard on some things held and practised by those communities, of which all the gentlemen (but one) concerned in the Lectures, are ministers. This must needs take

* The work is an octavo volume, closely printed, containing seventy-four pages.

off the force of their reasoning with Papists, who, being urged with such arguments as equally affect their opponents, will always insinuate that those ministers do not believe their own reasons to be cogent, since they think them not sufficiently convincing to induce their own communities to lay aside *infant sprinkling*, which, upon due reflection, will appear equally liable to the same objections with the traditionary practices of the Church of Rome.

"This consideration induced me to show their mistake in that particular, by their own arguments, which seemed the most likely way to convince, not only the ministers themselves, but also their followers; because their employing them against the Papists, shows that they have a good opinion of their validity. And I am fully persuaded, that if they can be induced to lay aside the practice here treated of, they may oppose Popery to more advantage another time, and urge the same arguments with a much better grace."

In the execution of this work, the writer finds abundant materials for his purpose; and by substituting the terms *infant sprinkling*, for the word *Popery*, he proves, that all the arguments used against Popery, as unscriptural and of human invention, apply with equal force against infant sprinkling.

As a specimen of Mr. Killingworth's manner of reasoning, the following short extract is made. "As to *infant sprinkling*, I affirm, in the words of Mr. Neale, on *The Supremacy*,—'There is not the least mention of it in Scripture; *nor is there any thing like it in the whole New Testament.* Surely St. Paul must have been guilty of a very great omission . . . . . not to mention it!' Mr. Smith, on *The Authority of the Church*, says, 'If this was the case, methinks the apostles should have taken care to leave it upon record, or at least to have given us some hint [of it] in Scripture.' Mr. Chandler, in his *Notes of the True Church*, says, 'We have no full and certain account of the doctrine taught by Christ and his apostles, but from the records of

the New Testament; and as these contain the whole revelation of the gospel, all that we are to believe and practise as Christians, it is an undeniable consequence, that we can no otherwise demonstrate our subjection and fidelity to Christ, as Lord and lawgiver in his Church, than by our care in acquainting ourselves with the sacred records of truth, and religiously adhering to them as the only rule and standard of our faith and worship; the adhering to which is an essential note of the Christian church. This, therefore, is the only true antiquity to which, as Christians, we are to appeal.' Dr. Wright, on *Scripture and Tradition*, says, 'The church of God, the true church of Christ, throughout all nations, is built entirely upon the Scriptures.' To which all the rest agree:—Dr. Harris, on *Transubstantiation;* Dr. Earle, on *Purgatory;* Dr. Hunt, on *Penance;* Mr. Bayes, on *Worship;* Mr. Barker, on *Popery the great Corruption;* Mr. Newman, on *Merit;* Mr. Lowman, on *Schism;* Mr. Leavesly, on *Reformation;* and Dr. Hughes, on *the Veneration of Saints.* Their uniform consent appears in the following passages. 'We acknowledge nothing as an authoritative rule of faith, but the Scriptures, the great charter of the Christian church;'—'The Holy Scripture, and that is the religion of Protestants;'—'Whose religion is Scripture alone;'—'The great rule to direct us how we are to worship God;'—'The Scriptures teach us the duty God requires of man;'—'We own it to be our only and entire rule;'—'The Christian church is properly represented as one body, or a society, incorporate by the charter of the gospel, under Jesus Christ as supreme head and governor;'—'The worship of God is a first and principal duty of the law of nature, and of all religion: to worship God according to the directions of the Christian revelation, is a chief duty of Christianity;'—'Christ and his apostles, by preaching and delivering the gospel truth, and by warning us of false apostles and deceitful workers, call all men every where to adhere to the truth as it is in Jesus;'—

'In a word, *nothing must be allowed in God's worship but what we have his warrant for; so that the very silence of Scripture is enough to condemn the praying to saints.*' Then assuredly" (concludes Mr. Killingworth,) "the *silence of Scripture* must equally condemn *infant sprinkling.*"

The third edition of this work was published in a short time, in the preface to which the author says, he has answered all the objections which he had heard brought against the *Supplement.* He also, in the year 1738, published a pamphlet of thirty-nine octavo pages, in vindication of his former work. This is entitled, "An Appendix to the Sermons lately preached at Salters' Hall, &c. containing an Answer to Mr. Emlyn's previous *Question,* &c.—also, a Reply to a Pamphlet, entitled, A JUST REBUKE TO OUR PERFIDIOUS AND FALSE BRETHREN;—in which (Reply) the charge of PERSECUTION is justly answered, and the case of Mr. John Child stated, and freed from the *Rebuker's* gross misrepresentations."

That the reader may form some idea of the manner in which Mr. Killingworth was treated by his opponent, who called his own work "*A Just Rebuke, &c.*" I shall quote one paragraph. Addressing the Baptists, he says, "*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye;* as your fathers, the Anabaptists of the last and former generations, ever since the beginning of the reformation have done, so do ye of the present generation. But God will deal with them in his own time and way, as he did with *Korah* and his company, and as he hath always done with all other proud despisers and contemners of his faithful ministers in all ages. I will mention but one instance; and that is one of their own brethren, Mr. John Child, an Anabaptist minister: what a fearful example of divine displeasure did God make of him, for a like case with this of theirs, viz. publishing a book unjustly reflecting on some of God's ministers and people."

Mr. Killingworth very calmly inquires, whether the cases

were parallel? whether he had *maliciously reviled* those he had written against? whether Mr. Child wrote a book against *infant sprinkling*, or against those ministers that practised it, while he remained in the communion of the Baptists? "The case," says he, "of Mr. John Child is so far from answering the Rebuker's design, that on the contrary it rather stands as a warning, that no man should desert our communion, and afterwards revile us?"* If, instead of using *rebukes*, the answerer had *proved* that infant sprinkling was Christian baptism, enjoined by Christ, and practised by the apostles, he would most effectually have silenced this argument of the Baptists; by virtue of which, they (with Dr. Gill) consider it as *a part and pillar of Popery*, because it has no other support than *tradition*,—the sandy foundation on which the Church of Rome is professedly built.

Before I close this section of our history, I will present the reader with the opinion of a modern sensible Roman Catholic writer upon the subject of infant baptism's having no support from the Scriptures. "Where," says this writer, "did the

* The awful case of this miserable man is given in our second volume, p. 605—607. He had been a minister and member of the church of Bedford, in Mr. Gifford's time, with Mr. Bunyan. He conformed to the Church of England after the restoration, through fear of fines and imprisonment. He published a work, reviling the Baptist ministers, his former brethren, who were suffering for conscience sake. And, in 1684, he laid violent hands upon himself. His book was answered, among others, by the famous Thomas Delaune, a Baptist schoolmaster, author of the celebrated work on Nonconformity. This tract is very scarce, and of great merit. It is entitled, "An Answer to *Mr. John Child's Paper*, called, 'A second Argument for a more full and firm Union among all good Protestants; wherein the Nonconformists taking the Sacrament after the manner of the Church of England is justified, &c. *in a Letter to a Friend*:' now again made public, as an Antidote against that fatal Paper: by Thomas Delaune. 1685."

Church of England learn this doctrine? Certainly not from the Scriptures; *for it is not recorded in the Scriptures*; it could only be from tradition."*

* The writer referred to is the Rev. John Lidgard, who, about seven years ago, published *Strictures on Dr. Marsh's* (the present Bishop of Peterborough) *Comparative View of the Churches of England and Rome.* Dr. Marsh had contended that the Church of England was founded upon the Scriptures alone, but that the Church of Rome admitted *traditions* also. To this Mr. Lidgard replies, "that there is no other foundation for infant baptism than *tradition*, on which the Church of Rome founds the practice; and that the Church of England, in rejecting the authority of *tradition*, has no proper ground for baptizing infants." Mr. Lidgard says, "The Church of England teaches the validity of infant baptism, because she speaks of those who receive baptism rightly!" He then asks, "But where did she learn this doctrine? Certainly not from the Scriptures; for it is not recorded in the Scriptures; it could only be from tradition." Dr. Marsh, it seems, had observed, "But our twenty-seventh article is so far from resting the practice of infant baptism on the authority of *tradition*, that it places the practice on a totally different footing. *The baptism of young children*, says the article, *is in any wise to be retained in the church as most agreeable to the institution of Christ.*" To this Mr. Lidgard answers, "This ought not to excite our surprise. It would indeed have been a most extraordinary oversight in the founders of the modern Church of England, if, after they had rejected tradition in their sixth article, they had retained it in their twenty-seventh. But men do not always act up to their professions. It may at times be convenient to say one thing and do another. *They had agreed to retain infant baptism: it was, therefore, necessary to rest it upon some ground.* ON SCRIPTURE THEY COULD NOT; FOR IT IS NOT TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE. The best expedient that remained, was to rest it on its agreement with the institution of Christ. But what is meant by this *agreement?* I regret that Dr. Marsh thought it foreign from his subject to explain it: to me, such an explanation seems absolutely necessary. Does it mean that Christ really instituted baptism? then they must have learned it from *tradition.* Does it mean that, after considering the subject attentively, they think it most probable that infants were baptized? then they acknowledge *that a very important part*

The year 1736 witnessed the celebration of the marriage of his Royal Highness Frederick Prince of Wales, and the Princess Augusta of Saxa-Gotha, the royal parents of his late Majesty George III. The protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations in London and Westminster presented an Address of congratulation to his Majesty on the happy occasion. The deputation consisted of three Presbyterians, two Independents, and two Baptists, in addition to the chairman, Mr. Samuel Wilson, by whom the Address was presented to the King. This Address I have not been able to procure.

The spirit of infidelity, which prevailed at this period, had prepared the minds of people, who were desirous of avoiding the imputation of having renounced Christianity, for giving a hearty welcome to the dogmas of Socinian preachers on the specious topics of natural religion and social virtue; and it required only a minister of popular talents, who could declaim with a *pleasant voice*, and in an eloquent style, as one who *played well on an instrument*, to collect together a large congregation of *rational* Christians. Such a preacher was found in the person of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) James Foster, one of the ministers of the Baptist church in Paul's Alley. In 1728 he engaged in a Lord's-day evening lecture at the Old Jewry, which he carried on for more than twenty years, with a degree of popularity which is said to have been unexampled among protestant Dissenters. The following description of this congregation, drawn by the pen of Dr. Fleming, successor to Dr. Foster, will give the reader a just idea of the sentiments, spirit, and tendency of these celebrated lectures:—"Here was a confluence of persons of every rank, station, and quality; wits, free-thinkers, numbers of the clergy; who, whilst they grati-

of the doctrine of Christ is left unrecorded in the Scripture."—Strictures upon Dr. Marsh's Comparative View, &c. p. 54. *Sold by Booker*, 61, *Bond-street, London.*

fied their curiosity, had their prepossessions shaken, and their prejudices loosened. And of the usefulness and success of these lectures, he (Dr. Foster) had a large number of written testimonials from unknown, as well as from known persons."*

Dr. Fleming has not informed us what ideas he meant to convey by the *usefulness* and *success* of these lectures. It was probably of the same kind with the usefulness of the late Dr. Priestley, who boasted that but for his conciliatory scheme, Mr. Robinson of Cambridge would have gone into infidelity. It is not likely "free-thinkers" were *converted* to Christianity by such sermons as were gratifying to "wits!" There is an essential difference between "men's prepossessions being shaken and their prejudices loosened," and their being turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, —the grand ends to be effected by the ministry of the gospel. But perhaps Dr. Fleming only meant to intimate, that many of Dr. Foster's hearers, who had already reached the gate of Socinianism at the head of the way, but for his having lectured on natural religion, social virtue, the eternal fitness of things, &c. would have passed through it, and, by following the high road, would not have stopped in their career till they had

* It has been thought likely that curiosity drew the celebrated Mr. Pope to become one of his occasional hearers. This conjecture receives some degree of confirmation from what Dr. Fleming says, "Wits and free thinkers" were among them. In the epilogue to his Satires, Pope has taken occasion to notice Dr. Foster thus:

"Let modest Foster, if he will, excel
Ten metropolitans in preaching well."

Bishop Warburton, whose pride was stung by such a reflection upon the clergy, has the following sarcastic and jure divino remark: "This confirms an observation which Mr. Hobbes (the atheist) made long ago, that there be very few bishops that act a sermon so well as divers Presbyterians and fanatics do."

reached the dark and dreary mansion of infidelity, by giving up even a professed respect for Christianity.

It is gratifying to find, while one Baptist minister was thus administering moral poison, that others of our ministers were employed in furnishing the antidote to counteract its dreadful operation, and its destructive tendency. Mr. John Brine wrote in the most powerful and evangelical manner; and Mr. Samuel Wilson, and Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Joseph Stennett, employed their powerful and commanding talents in preaching the doctrines of grace, the doctrines according to godliness. From the "Dedication" prefixed to a sermon published in 1738 by the last of these ministers, the following extract is made:—"The amazing progress which infidelity is daily making, cannot but deeply afflict the heart of every serious person: nor is it difficult to trace the steps by which this dreadful apostasy so swiftly advances, and by whose assistance it is that it has been chiefly promoted. I shall only observe, that the Deists would never have laboured the subversion of Christianity, as they have done, had the design of it been no more than to reform the morals of mankind. But the account it gives of the trinity of persons in the undivided essence of God, is a deep mystery, and not to be scanned by human reason; the representation it sets before them of the sinfulness and misery into which human nature is sunk by the fall, *stains the pride of their glory;* salvation by the blood and righteousness of the incarnate Son of God, is to them *foolishness;* and the work of the Spirit, in changing and sanctifying the hearts of men, together with the faith and holiness which they evidently see the gospel requires, are doctrines so disagreeable to flesh and blood, that they can by no means receive them; and therefore they reject revelation itself, notwithstanding all the evidence that supports it. This has always been the case; and it were to be wished, that these unhappy men might see their danger before it be too late. But surely it must be a most weak and base expedient to at-

tempt to bring them back to Christianity at the expense of the fundamental articles of it, and by reducing the gospel of Christ Jesus to only a few lectures on morality. This you know has been the modern way. And what has the success of it been? If, indeed, by this method, infidels were convinced and reclaimed, the wavering were established, and the hearts and lives of men were made better, these fashionable teachers would have something to say. But, instead of this, we daily see, that when many of their followers come to be persuaded that there is no more in Christianity than a refinement upon the morality of the heathens, they think it hardly worth pursuing, and so declare for infidelity. We see also that practical iniquity keeps pace with these corruptions; and infidels themselves, instead of being convinced by such absurd reasonings, or won over by such mean and scandalous concessions, smile at the folly of those that offer them, and wonder that they should be fond of the name of Christians, while they are every day doing more harm to Christianity than themselves.

"These are the blessed effects of our new divinity; and though many honest and good men could hardly be prevailed upon some time ago to believe, that those who begun the popular cry against schemes in religion, intended to strike against the system of doctrine contained in the Scriptures; that they exposed all creeds and confessions of faith, in order to run down the faith itself; or that they ridiculed catechisms, with an intent to hinder the rising generation from being acquainted, if possible, with the doctrines of the gospel; yet time, I think, has put all this out of question.

"The consideration of these things affords a melancholy prospect to all the true friends of religion; and nothing could support their hopes in such a day as this, were they not assured, from past experience, that the gospel of salvation, with every doctrine it contains, has withstood all sorts of opposition, and that the promise of eternal truth has secured its continu-

ance to the end of time. But still we are to consider, that this may be made good in other parts of the world, though as a just punishment for the abuse of the light we have enjoyed, the gospel should be removed from our ungrateful land, and our posterity should become as blind and barbarous as our wretched ancestors were before they received it. The great and general decay of vital and experimental godliness, which good men observe in others, and feel in their own hearts, is a most threatening symptom of the approach of such a dreadful dispensation.

"Can *they* have done any service to the cause of revelation, who have complimented the enemies of it by delivering up any of its peculiar doctrines; doctrines which were constantly taught by Christ and his apostles through the whole course of their ministry; doctrines which depend not upon a few obscure passages of holy writ, but which have the current of the Scriptures on their side; doctrines which were diligently preached by the primitive fathers of the church, in the purest ages of it,—which have overcome all sorts of opposition in after times,—and which have been sealed with the blood of so many martyrs? We should remember that our brave forefathers laid these principles as the basis of the reformation from Popery.—Let us look but one age back, when these doctrines were generally received in these kingdoms; and what a holy and heavenly spirit breathed in the sermons, in the writings, and in the lives of the eminent men of those times! what success attended their public labours, in the conversion of sinners and the edification of the saints! and how did the conversation of professors recommend their principles! The common reproach that is cast upon the doctrines of grace is, that they tend to licentiousness: and the fashionable teachers of our time tell us, that their scheme is strictly calculated to promote good works. But surely it will be in fact acknowledged, when a just comparison is drawn between the lives of professors in

the last age and of those in this, that this change of principles has been far from being attended with an improvement in practical religion, the adversaries of these glorious truths themselves being judges."*

Thus powerfully, by an appeal to facts as well as to the Scriptures, did this eloquent preacher contend for *the faith once delivered to the saints,* in opposition to those, who were speciously and artfully employed *in spoiling men through philosophy and vain deceit, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

This may be the suitable place to introduce the name of the learned and pious Dr. Watts, (the sweet singer of the British Israel,) who wrote with more candour respecting the Baptist sentiments than any who had preceded him among the Independents or Presbyterians. It appears that this very great man had entertained a serious intention of attempting to unite the Baptists and Independents into one body, seeing there were no differences between them, either as to doctrine or discipline, excepting the one point of Christian baptism.

The knowledge of this having been the mind of this good

* "The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel; a Sermon preached at the Rev. Mr. Hill's Meeting-place, in Thames-street, February 9, 1738, before a Society of Ministers and Gentlemen engaged in a Design for the Encouragement of Young Men in their Studies for the Ministry, whose Hearts God has inclined to that sacred Work. Published, with some Enlargements, by Joseph Stennett. London, printed for Aaron Ward," &c. The writer conjectures that this was the Independent Academy under the care of Abraham Taylor, D. D. of Deptford. If so, it affords evidence of the good understanding that prevailed between Independent and Baptist ministers at that period. Mr. Stennett's sermon, which extends to eighty-four octavo pages, besides twelve pages of dedication, is a masterly defence of evangelical truth. Had it been published in the form of an essay, it would probably have been better known, and more extensively read.

and catholic minister of Jesus Christ, was brought to light by the following circumstance. In the year 1782 several pamphlets were published on the Baptist controversy by the Rev. John Carter, of Matishall, in Norfolk, and the late Rev. William Richards, of Lynn. At the close of one of his pamphlets, Mr. Richards had asserted, in reference to *sprinkling* not being the proper mode of baptism, that "*Dr. Watts told his friend Mr. G.* (Mr. afterwards Dr. Gibbons,) *that he wished infant baptism was laid aside.*"

Whether Mr. Richards was fully justified in making so broad an assertion, will be judged of by the following extract of a letter, written by Dr. Gibbons to Mr. Carter, in consequence of it, dated "London, June 22, 1782."

"Reverend Sir,

"I find it has been asserted, in a publication, that *Dr. Watts* declared to me, (for I am said to be the person referred to, though only the initial letter of my name, and not my name at length, is printed,) that he *wished infant baptism was laid aside.* It is not a little disagreeable to me, that what I mentioned casually in conversation, without the least apprehension I should hear of it again in the public manner I have done, should have come into the press, and thence communicated to the world. But as this has been the case, it may not be improper, nay it may have become necessary, for me to give a plain account of the matter, which I shall do with the strictest regard to truth, and without the least tincture of partiality.

"The Doctor and myself were one day, perhaps two or three years before his decease, in a free converse together, when (I cannot recollect how the subject was introduced) he expressed himself to this purpose, '*That he had sometimes thought of a compromise with our Baptist brethren, by their giving up their mode of baptism, immersion, on the one side, and our giving up the baptism of infants on the other, as he had not observed any benefit*

arising from the administration of the ordinance to them.' This was the whole, from what I remember, the Doctor said upon the point; which, in my opinion, falls much short of a declaration from him, that *he wished infant baptism to be laid aside.*"*

The fact, however, is clear and indisputable, that Dr. Watts would have proposed to concede the point of the baptism of *infants,* had there been any probability that the Baptists would have conceded that of *immersion,* that is to say, would have agreed, that in future all persons in their churches should be sprinkled, if the Independents would agree, that none among them, except professed believers, should be baptized. This suggestion from so eminent a man, serves to prove, that there was a conviction in his mind, that there was no necessity that any except believers should be baptized; and shews, that whatever views he might have of the divine authority for infant sprinkling, they had but a slight hold upon his mind, as "he had never observed any benefit to arise from the administration of baptism to them;" and that he had sometimes thought of proposing, as the condition of a compromise with his Baptist brethren, "the giving up of the baptism of infants." On the other hand, it is indeed wonderful, that Dr. Watts should not have known the Baptists better than ever to imagine it possible that they would consent to "give up their mode of baptism," for the sake of accomplishing any object whatever, even though that should be the apparent union of two bodies composed of sincere, evangelical, and congregational protestant Dissenters. He might certainly have known from their writings, that they consider immersion not as a *mode* of baptism, more proper than some other mode, but as *the thing* itself; and that they maintain, that baptism is a religious immersion of the body in water,

* The Monthly and Literary Journal, from January to June inclusive, 1784, by several hands. Vol. lxx. p. 398.

—and that such an immersion, performed according to the commission and example of Christ, and the practice of the apostles, is the only Christian baptism.*

* That Dr. Watts was not very zealous for *sprinkling*, as the mode of baptism, appears from the following quotation from his sermon on "Christian Baptism."—"The Greek word, '*baptizo*,' signifies to '*wash*' any thing properly by water coming over it." After mentioning what "learned men had argued" in proof of this assertion, he adds, "But this shall suffice for a hint of this controversy, which has filled large volumes in the world, made a huge noise in the church, and destroyed the charity of a multitude of Christians. Since I do not here profess to enter into the argument, but only to give a few short notices or rehearsals of what is said in our vindication, who practise the baptism of infants by sprinkling water on them, I do the rather ask leave to speak one charitable word on this subject, *viz. that since this controversy has considerable difficulties attending it, persons of an honest and sincere soul, in searching out the truth, may happen to run into different opinions: and the things in which we agree are so important, as should not suffer us to quarrel about the lesser things wherein we differ. Our brethren who reject infant baptism, as well as we who practise it, all agree in a belief of the sacred institution of this ordinance, and in a reverence for it; we all agree that the children should be devoted to God, and should be partakers of all the utmost privileges into which the Scripture admits them, and that they should grow up under all possible obligations to duty; and since each of us desires to find out the will of Christ, and to practise accordingly, it is a most unreasonable thing we should be angry with each other.*"

Nor does Dr. Watts appear in his writings remarkably tenacious for *infants* being the proper *subjects* of baptism. He asks, "Who are the subjects of this ordinance of baptism, or to whom is it to be administered?" To this he replies, "The *first*, THE MOST PROPER, or at least *the most evident subjects of it*, are persons who *confess their sins*, and *profess to repent of them*, and *who accept* of the grace and salvation offered in the gospel; those who have been *taught* the chief doctrines and duties of the gospel of Christ, and *profess* to *believe* and *receive* them, and to *comply* with them; those who *take upon them the religion of Christ, become his disciples, and give up their names to him.* There is no difference, whether Greek or Jew, whether male or female, as there was in the Jewish cere-

If the Baptists had not decidedly and universally held these sentiments, we should probably before this have heard of some one among their ministers, for the sake of peace, and for the manifestation of Christian charity, having given up the immersion of adult believers, and having practised *sprinkling* in its stead. But such an instance there has never been, nor is it likely that there ever will be. It is true there have been a few young ministers, who (like the eminent Dr. Benjamin Grosvenor of this period) have deserted our standard;* but then,

mony of circumcision, which belonged properly to the Jewish nation, and admitted none but males; but *all professors of the gospel must receive this ceremony, and be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:* and this *is the most common account the New Testament gives us of this matter,* THAT WHEN PERSONS PROFESSED THEIR FAITH IN CHRIST, THEY WERE BAPTIZED. TEXTS OF THIS KIND NEED NOT BE QUOTED, THEY ARE SO NUMEROUS."

Had the Doctor closed with this paragraph, none could have imagined him to be a Pædobaptist, and in the practice of *sprinkling infants;* but he adds, "But in the Christian church, from its early ages, and we think from the Apostles' time, it hath been the *custom* also to baptize the infant children of professed Christians; *and though there be* NO *such express and plain commands or examples of it written in the Scriptures as we might have expected,* yet there are several *inferences* to be drawn from what is written, which afford a just and reasonable encouragement to this practice, and guard it from the censure of superstition and will-worship. *This has been a long and troublesome dispute indeed among the churches since the Reformation. I shall not pretend to debate it here,*" &c.

The reader is to judge which paragraph is most consonant to the meaning of Scripture, and the spirit of genuine *protestantism* and consistent *dissenterism.* In the mean while, it is probable that the Baptists will continue to take the safe side, and baptize those *only* whom this highly respected advocate for infant-sprinkling considered as "*the first, the most proper, and the most evident subjects of it.*"

* This circumstance in the life of Dr. Benjamin Grosvenor, Mr. Wilson says, vol. i. p. 346, "has been passed over by his biographer." And

renouncing altogether the sentiment, that professed believers are the only proper subjects of baptism, they have given up their principles respecting both the mode and the subject. These observations are only made to show the impracticability

yet, as it appears he attended to baptism with "uncommon seriousness of disposition," even those who considered he had acted unwisely, need not have thought it an act of such juvenile indiscretion as to be a blot upon his memory. The most probable supposition is, that the Doctor did not make it known to his friends; and that, although Crosby's History of the Baptists, published in 1740, contained the fact, they had not come to the knowledge of it. The circumstances (as stated by Mr. Crosby) are, that about the year 1689, Mr. Benjamin Grosvenor, then a youth of fourteen, was baptized by Mr. Benjamin Keach, and became a member of the church in Goat-street, Horselydown. This he continued to be about seven or eight years. Having a desire for the ministry, he was encouraged to exercise his gifts, and preached privately several times at the house of Mr. Keach, before him and other members of the church. As Mr. Keach and his friends found Mr. Grosvenor to be a youth of very promising abilities, they encouraged his parents to obtain for him literary instructions, that he might be the better fitted for the work of the ministry. They accordingly sent him to the Presbyterian academy at Attercliff in Yorkshire, kept by the celebrated Mr. Timothy Jollie. Soon after his return from the academy, when he was about twenty-two years of age, he told some of the members of the church, that it was his opinion that *infants* ought to be *baptized;* that the *government* of the church ought to be in the *eldership*, and not in the *members;* and that *unordained* persons, that is to say, those who had not received *Presbyterian* ordination, ought not to preach. "These things," says Mr. Crosby, who was one of the members, "moved the church to deal plainly with him: they recommended to him his reading impartially Mr. Tombe's *Examen;* and appointed proper persons to discourse these points with him. After much time spent between the church and him in *controversy* without any effect, he desired a dismission; but not being determined where to fix himself, they were necessarily obliged to grant his request, and did dismiss him in a general manner from his membership with them."

Mr. Wilson, who in general writes with great correctness and candour,

of the scheme meditated by Dr. Watts for bringing about such a comprehension. However desirable UNION may be in the church, especially among those who "hold the head, even Christ," yet, unless it can be obtained without either party giving up what they consider as *a rite of divine authority*, they must be content to entertain and cherish for each other the most sincere brotherly love and affection, whilst they unite only in those things which are common to them as evangelical Christians, or as members of civil and political society, and which will not require the sacrifice of truth and conscience. To such a union as this the Baptists have never manifested any reluctance;

seems to have lost himself upon this occasion. He says in a note, vol. i. p. 347, "From Crosby's account the reader will necessarily conclude that Mr. Grosvenor received a peaceable dismission. The contrary, however, was the fact, and it afterwards operated to his injury. Most of the ministers of that period, at least of the Independent and Presbyterian denominations, considered him to have been treated with harshness and injustice." But it appears really astonishing that these *Pædobaptist* ministers should consider the treatment to be "harsh and unjust," when Mr. Grosvenor had embraced Pædobaptism and Presbyterianism, that the church in Goat-street should grant him a dismission, even though he had not fixed upon union with any other Dissenting church. Mr. Wilson has furnished no *proof*, either that Crosby's account is unworthy of credit, or that Mr. Grosvenor was injured by the Baptist church, which had treated him with so much kindness, and even tenderness, and which granted him a dismission from this community as soon as he had signified his wish to leave them.

Dr. Grosvenor was a minister in London, of the Presbyterian denomination, for upwards of fifty years. He died August 27, 1758, in the 83d year of his age. He was one of the ministers who bare the pall at the funeral of Dr. Watts in 1748. One of his friends, on that occasion, thus accosted him,—"Well, Dr. Grosvenor, you have seen the end of Dr. Watts, and you will soon follow;—what think you of death?" "Think of it?" replied he; "why, when death comes, I shall smile upon death, if God smiles upon me."

nor can an instance be produced of their having in any place, even where they have been the most numerous and powerful sect, despised or persecuted those Christians who have differed from them.

The reader is now come to another subject of vital importance to the purity and reputation of Dissenting churches,—that of receiving the Lord's Supper in the Church of England as a qualification for civil offices. There had been no instance of "occasional conformity" in any of the London particular Baptist churches till the year 1742. At the beginning of that year a Mr. Baskerville was elected to the office of common-council man for the city of London, and had qualified himself for that office by receiving the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. The church of which he was a member proceeded to censure him, but in private, for this conduct. He pleaded the rights of conscience, and said that his only reason was that he might be useful in life, and of service to the Dissenting interest. He complained of the interference of the Church, as destructive to the right of private judgment, and intimated his intention, after being elected a second time to the office, of receiving his qualification by again taking the sacrament. Mr. Baskerville had also said, that he should have asked his dismission from the church, but that he thought "the other churches that were Baptists and Calvinists would not receive him, when he should inform them, as in conscience he must, with his reason and design in leaving his former communion."

The church in Unicorn Yard, whose pastor was Mr. Thomas Flower, proceeded with much tenderness, but with great firmness, and regard for the purity of religion; and in order to obtain for Mr. Baskerville all the authority they were able in confirmation of the correctness of their opinion, they resolved to request the Board of Ministers, and the churches which they represented, to favour them with their opinion upon the following question, viz. "Whether a person ought to be continued in

the fellowship of the church, who shall have received the sacrament in the Church of England to qualify himself for executing an office of trust or profit, when at the same time he does not incur any penalty if he refuses to accept the place?"

This question being submitted to the ministers at the Coffee-house, January 4, 1742-3, fourteen ministers agreed unanimously, "that it is absolutely unlawful for any member of a gospel church to communicate with the Church of England on any consideration whatever." They agreed also to request the churches to send two deputies with their minister to the meeting-house in Great East-cheap, on January 11, at 3 o'clock.

The ministers carried the question and request to their respective churches; and they all concurred in the opinion I find recorded in the church-book of Little Wild-street, "That such person ought not to be continued in the fellowship of the church."

The ministers and deputies from each of the particular churches, whose pastors were associated at the Coffee-house, met at the time appointed, and agreed upon the following sensible and characteristic letter. The chairman, Mr. Samuel Wilson, was directed to sign it, and to send it to the church in Unicorn-yard.

FROM THE MINISTERS AND DEPUTIES.

"Dearly beloved in the Lord,

"You will receive by your messengers a copy of our proceedings with relation to the people meeting in White-street, *and also the sense of all the churches, in answer to the question which was laid before us relating to the lawfulness of continuing communion with persons, who, for the sake of places of profit or honour, occasionally conform to the Church of England.* As it has been matter of great grief to us, and we are persuaded to you also, that there should be such a cause as this given to any

one of our communities to seek advice, so it is no small consolation to us, to find that the churches are so well united in their judgment on this occasion. We hope this happy unanimity will have its weight with the congregation most immediately concerned; and that they will faithfully discharge their duty in this matter. And we heartily wish it may have the most desirable effect on the mind and conduct of the brother who has given the offence, that so he may be humbled and reclaimed, and delivered out of the snare which is laid for his soul.

"Such has been the influence this sad affair has had upon our minds, and such we hope we can truly say is our jealousy for the glory of God, the purity of our holy profession, and the welfare of the churches to which we stand related, as well as the bad effect we apprehend our example in this city might have on our sister churches throughout the kingdom, should so dangerous an evil obtain the least footing amongst us, that we have thought it incumbent on us, as the ministers of Jesus Christ, and your representatives, in the fear of God, and in the love we bear to the interest of the dear Redeemer and your precious souls, to offer you a few words of advice on this important occasion.

"And we would put you in mind, Christian brethren, that how few soever our churches are in number, and however contemptible they appear in the eyes of the world, it has been their distinguishing mercy to be founded on the true scriptural plan. Without taking any glory to ourselves, but ascribing it all where it is justly due, we may be bold to claim the purest character in this respect in the whole world. And in the midst of all declensions and corruptions which we have so much reason to mourn over, blessed be God, *we have hitherto been preserved from such a defection as this*, while we have seen, with great grief, the indulgence and growth of it among some others of our Dissenting brethren, though we know it has been also greatly bewailed by the most serious among them.

"The separation of our forefathers from the national establishment was founded on principle. They could not, they durst not, submit to any religious constitution, but what was strictly regulated by the word of God; nor receive as the rule of their faith, their worship, or their discipline, what appeared to them to derive its origin only from the inventions and decisions of fallible men. They knew very well, that even a pin in the sanctuary that was not of divine appointment, would have been a high offence against heaven; and they had found, that so innocent a ceremony in itself as that of washing the hands before eating, when enjoined as a religious duty by mere human authority, though the greatest upon earth, was condemned by Christ, as an invasion of the rights of conscience, and, which is still more dangerous, of the prerogatives of God himself; and therefore they could not hesitate one moment in their refusal of communion with a church, the very frame of which is contrary to the appointment of our great Lord and his apostles,—a church that owes its constitution, its officers, its discipline, and many of its modes of worship, merely to human policy and power;—a church that assumes to itself an arbitrary right of imposing its prescriptions on the consciences of men;—in a word, a church that has almost universally departed from many of those articles of its own faith, which are agreeable with Scripture, and of very great importance to Christianity, and that indulges in its bosom multitudes of people of the most corrupt principles, and the most immoral and profligate lives.

For this laudable separation, our forefathers, with great Christian patience and courage, suffered the most grievous reproaches on their character, the spoiling of their goods, and the imprisonment of their persons; and not a few of them sealed their faithful testimony with their blood. If we, therefore, brethren, in such a day of liberty as this, should, for the sake of the emoluments of this world, or out of a mistaken charity, give up this glorious cause, or indulge any in our communion that do so, or

that submit to a wicked prostitution of the holy Supper, which was instituted by our dear Redeemer as the memorial of his dying love, to the purposes of worldly honour or lucrative employments, surely we should be unworthy of the character of the descendants of such ancestors; our profession would be exposed to the ridicule of the profane; we should be justly esteemed hypocrites by the very men that impose this ordinance as a civil test upon us; and, after we have been so often mourning over this scandalous prostitution as the sin of our legislature, and the apostasy of too many of our Dissenting brethren who have basely submitted to it, we should ourselves become most sad partakers of their iniquities, and, it is to be feared, draw down the righteous indignation of heaven upon our communities. For happy is he who condemneth not himself in that thing which he abhorreth; and the God whom we worship, as he cannot be deceived, so he will not be mocked.

"Brethren, we hope better things than these of you all; but we conclude you will not think this caution to be unseasonable at this time: and we beseech you, in the bowels of our dear Lord, as you tender the honour of his name, the presence of his Spirit, the prosperity of your community, the love of your brethren, and the welfare and comfort of your own souls, that you will carefully watch against all corruption in doctrine and in practice in these sad times; and in a special manner, lest, at any time, this root of bitterness springing up among you, many be defiled; and that you will put it away from you wherever it is found. And thus commending you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able not only to keep you from falling, but to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified, we remain,

Your brethren in the faith and order of the gospel,

SAMUEL WILSON, Chairman."

January 14, 1742-3.

Neither the reasoning of this admirable epistle, nor the unanimous sentiment of reprobation expressed by the churches, was sufficient to convince Mr. Baskerville of the impropriety and profanity of making the symbols of the dying love of the Saviour "the stepping-stone to office, and the picklock of a place." The church, however, knew its duty, and manifested their allegiance to the King of Zion by putting away from among them this wicked person. "On Aug. 22, 1743, the messengers who had been appointed to converse with Mr. Baskerville reported, that he had again, by taking the sacrament in the Church of England, qualified himself for the office of common-council man: it was therefore agreed, that, as he had by so doing profaned the sacred ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and acted contrary to the admonition of the church, they do now adjudge him to be no longer a member of this church." It appears, notwithstanding, that he continued still of the congregation, as he was several times after this appointed one of the deputies for defending their civil rights.

The Particular Baptist Churches in London have always been preserved from this disgraceful compromise of their principles as Dissenters and Christians, for the purpose of their members being invested with civic honours. A very few instances have occurred since of the same practice; but the writer believes they have always been immediately discountenanced by the ministers and churches, so that the discipline of the churches has either purged them from the contamination, or restored the offender to his right mind. He wishes he could say as much of some others of the Baptist churches situated in corporations,—some of which, by sanctioning, or winking at, such conduct, have brought more disgrace upon themselves than ever they have received of honour and advantage from the Sheriff's ermine, or the Mayor's golden chain of office.*

* The writer records it to the honour of one of the western churches,

The events of this year afforded to the friends of the Royal House cause for rejoicing, and for manifesting their gratitude for the protection which God had mercifully granted to their lawful Sovereign. One of the events alluded to was the famous battle of Dettingen, where the King of England commanded in person the confederate forces. The 17th of July, 1743, "being appointed by their Excellencies the Lords Justices for returning thanks to Almighty God for the late glorious victory obtained by his Majesty at Dettingen," Mr. Joseph Stennett, that loyal patriot minister, seized the opportunity of preaching on the occasion at Little Wild-street. This sermon was published at the request of the congregation, and soon reached a second edition. It is not necessary for me to copy the judicious statement made of the circumstances which induced the King to enter into the war; but the object was to check the French Monarch in his scheme of obtaining the supreme dominion in Europe, and to chastise his violation of the most solemn engagements in attacking the House of Austria. The French army was very superior to the English, both as to numbers and discipline: it was under the command of the Marshal de Noailles, a most experienced officer, and had every advantage of position and attack, of magazines and artillery. And yet God gave a signal victory to the King of England, making bare his arm in his protection, and in the triumph which was achieved on that memorable day.

This eloquent preacher thus concludes:—"May we never cease to pray for the safety and true glory of our King, and for every divine blessing on his sacred person, and on all his royal posterity! May we *study the things that make for* the public

(the church at Lyme,) that in 1778 they excluded a member instantly, who had qualified himself for the office of free-burgess by taking the sacrament in the Church of England;—an example this, worthy the imitation of their neighbours, and of the whole body of protestant Dissenters!

peace and welfare; and if there be any *strange children* * left among us, who have forgotten their vows in the days of their distress, and when French counsels prevailed in this nation, may God open their eyes, and humble them more for their great sin and folly! I hope none such are to be found among the *protestant Dissenters;* and I am glad I have this opportunity to say, that it has administered no small pleasure to a large assembly of them in this city, to reflect, that they, with the assistance of several of their ministers, were warmly wrestling with Heaven for the salvation we now celebrate, at the very hour when the battle began."

The general body of Protestant Dissenting Ministers presented an Address of congratulation to the King on his return after this memorable campaign.

The following Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the cities of London and Westminster, was presented to the King, Jan. 4, 1744, by the Rev. Obadiah Hughes, D. D. attended by several of his brethren:—

"May it please your Majesty,

"We humbly beg leave to congratulate your Majesty upon the happy concurrence of many favourable providences which have lately attended your royal person and family, in whose prosperity we are greatly interested, and feel a most sensible pleasure.

"Your Majesty's safe return to these your British dominions rejoices the hearts of all your good subjects. This joy is much increased by reflecting on the extreme dangers to which, in defence of the liberties of Europe, you generously exposed

* Referring to the text on which the discourse was founded, Ps. cxliv. 9—11.

your life in the fields of Dettingen, and acquired immortal honour; where, under the influence of Heaven, and animated by your presence and valour, the confederate army gained an important victory over the common enemy.

"This, with the recovery of the Duke from the honourable wound he received in the battle, the marriage of the Princess Louisa with the Prince Royal of Denmark, and the birth of another son to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, is such a series of events as greatly encourages our hopes, that the goodness of God will perpetuate the blessings which we persuade ourselves his providence designed in placing your Majesty's family upon the throne of these kingdoms, under which we have enjoyed so many years of peace and prosperity.

"We gladly embrace the opportunity to assure your Majesty, that we are deeply sensible of our share in the public happiness under your auspicious government; and that we shall, from principles both of gratitude and of conscience, continue our endeavours to impress the minds of those to whom we minister, with such sentiments, as shall tend to confirm them in loyalty and affection to so excellent a Prince.

"Nor shall we cease to offer up our most fervent prayers to the King of kings, that wisdom from above may always direct your Majesty's counsels, and such further success attend your arms, as may produce that lasting security of the liberties of Europe, and those blessings to these kingdoms, which your Majesty has in view; that your Majesty's most precious life may continue to be the special care of the Almighty, who covered your head in the day of battle; that, after a long and prosperous reign, you may inherit a crown of immortality in the world to come; and that there never may be wanting a successor to your royal line, who, after your Majesty's great example, shall be the guardian of the liberties of these kingdoms till time shall be no more."

To which his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

"I THANK YOU FOR THIS DUTIFUL ADDRESS. YOU MAY DEPEND UPON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION."*

In the month of March the general Body presented an address of loyal attachment on account of his Majesty having heard of a design on the part of the French to invade these kingdoms.

The following Address of the protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the cities of London and Westminster, was presented to his Majesty by the Rev. John Guyse, D. D. attended by several of his brethren.

"Most gracious Sovereign,

"We humbly beg leave, on this important occasion, to renew the solemn assurances we lately gave your Majesty of our unalterable attachment to your sacred person and government.

"It is with great surprise to us, that an insolent and perfidious nation, in revenge for the repulse they have met with from your Majesty's arms abroad, should form the design of invading you at home, in favour of an outlawed popish Pretender. But that any of those who live under your Majesty's just and mild government should be so infatuated and abandoned as to give them any encouragement, raises our indignation and astonishment.

"Your Majesty's known wisdom and valour; the noble ardour and firmness of both your Houses of Parliament; the cheerful concurrence of your faithful subjects of all ranks and orders, in declaring their inviolable fidelity to your Majesty; the tried courage of your forces; and your Majesty's season-

* Gentleman's Magazine, vol. iv. p. 48.

able call on your people to fasting and prayer;—as they justly encourage our hopes of your long and prosperous reign, so they may well damp all expectations of success in the most inveterate and sanguine of your enemies.

"Our detestation of Popery, and of that arbitrary power which would naturally attend it, were it ever to be introduced among us, and our apprehensions of danger from both, are not at all abated by any such pretended coalition of parties, as has left among us no enemies to your Majesty and our happy constitution. We therefore think it our duty and interest to do our utmost (even at the hazard of our all in this world) for the safety of your royal person and government, with which our civil and religious rights are inseparably connected.

"And we crave leave to assure your Majesty, that while we endeavour to cultivate such sentiments in those under our care, and to warm their breasts with zeal for your Majesty, and affection to your illustrious family, we will not fail to offer up our most ardent prayers to God, that he would direct your Majesty's counsels, prosper your arms, and defeat the designs of all your enemies, in so remarkable a manner, as may convince the whole world, that your sacred person, your royal family, and our dear country, are the objects of the special favour and constant protection of Divine Providence."

To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

"I THANK YOU FOR THIS ADDRESS, AND FOR THIS FRESH MARK OF YOUR DUTY AND AFFECTION TO MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT. YOU MAY ALWAYS DEPEND UPON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION."*

A serious rebellion soon afterward threatened the nation, the adherents of the Pretender being actually in arms, and even making

* Gentleman's Magazine, vol. xiv. p. 164.

a rapid progress towards the metropolis. The King had resolved to take the field, and to plant the royal standard on Finchley Common. The Deputies of the Dissenters in London were speedily called together: they met on the 27th of September, and resolved, "That it be recommended to the body of protestant Dissenters to express their utmost zeal and readiness to join with any number of his Majesty's subjects, in order to support his Majesty's person and government in the present time of danger, in any legal way that shall be most effectual."

A circular letter was sent by them into the country, in pursuance of the above resolution; and it is highly probable that this spirited conduct led to the formation of armed associations of Dissenters, and that some of their principal men were honoured with commissions from the King. Even ministers were seen encouraging their people to enlist themselves under these banners, and their meeting-houses were used for the purpose of training their youth to arms. They who had accepted commissions, had, by so doing, made themselves liable to the penalties of the Test Act; but their loyalty and patriotism prevailed; and England witnessed the strange sight of beholding men willing to spend their blood in the support of a government, which had refused to admit them even to the paltry office of an exciseman, or a tide-waiter of the customs, without requiring from them the sacrifice of their most sacred and conscientious feelings.

The following is the form of the Association which was signed on this trying occasion:—

"We whose names are subscribed, being of opinion that in times so full of danger and treasonable practices as these are, a union of our hearts and forces will be most conducive to his Majesty's safety, and the good of our country, —do voluntarily and willingly bind ourselves, every one of us to the other, jointly and severally, in the band of one

firm and loyal society, and do hereby promise, that with our whole powers, bodies, lives, and estates, we, and every of us, will stand by and assist each other in the defence of his Majesty's sacred person and government, and pursue the said popish Pretender and traitor."

In the next month, the Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations in London were forward in testifying their affection to the King and his government, by presenting the following Address to his Majesty, by the hands of that eminently loyal minister, Mr. Joseph Stennett, who had the honour of being personally known to, and esteemed by the King. The London Gazette published the Address, and the Reply of his Majesty.

"*Kensington, October* 3, 1745. This day the following Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, was presented to the King by the Rev. Joseph Stennett, attended by several of his brethren; being introduced by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

"To the King's most excellent Majesty.

"*The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster.*

"Most gracious Sovereign,

"We, your most dutiful and faithful subjects, beg leave to approach your royal person with great thankfulness to God, and affectionate congratulations to your Majesty, on your safe and happy return to your British dominions, on the prosperity of your arms in North America, and on the success of your zealous and prudent endeavours to restore the balance of power in Europe to its ancient and natural situation.

"As the religious and civil liberties, the happiness and honour of the nation, have been always your Majesty's unwearied care, we cannot but detest and abhor the present unnatural and rebellious attempt to impose upon these kingdoms a Papist and abjured Pretender. We trust in God, that so wicked and desperate an enterprise will issue in the speedy and utter overthrow of these infatuated traitors, and the still firmer establishment of your Majesty's throne and the succession in your illustrious family; on which, under Divine Providence, the enjoyment of all that is dear to us depends.

"Nothing, Sire, we are persuaded, within the power of the protestant Dissenters, will be wanting to defend and secure your Majesty's just and undoubted right to the imperial crown of these realms; the weight of which you have always supported with so much dignity to yourself, and happiness to your people.

"We shall never cease to offer our most fervent prayers to the great Sovereign of heaven and earth, for the preservation of your Majesty's invaluable life, the tranquillity and glory of your reign, and the conveyance of our liberties, under the protection of your royal house, to the end of time.

"To which his Majesty was pleased to return this most gracious answer:—

"I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL ADDRESS, AND HAVE A FIRM DEPENDENCE ON YOUR STEADY ATTACHMENT TO MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT; YOU MAY DEPEND ON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION.

"They were received very graciously, and had all the honour to kiss his Majesty's hand."

The opinion which the ministers and churches of our denomination had of this unnatural popish rebellion may be further

judged of by the sentiments of one of their leading ministers, Dr. John Gill. In the notes of a manuscript sermon, on Psalm xxv. 3, "*Let them be ashamed that transgress without a cause,*" he thus wrote, December 2, 1745: "King David's subjects rebelled against him *treacherously without cause.* Such are them who are risen up against our rightful Sovereign, King George; a parcel of perfidious, treacherous wretches; some of them who were in the last *rebellion,* and obtained his *father's* PARDON; others that partook yearly of his royal bounty, for the instruction of their children; and all have enjoyed the blessings of his mild and gentle government; and therefore are without cause his enemies." This was the language of the heart; and of the heart when employed in the most solemn exercises.

The rebel army entered Derby on December 4, 1745. This was the most southerly point of their progress towards London. From hence, terrified by the approach of the army of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, to meet them, they began to retreat northwards on December 6. A sermon was preached by Mr. Joseph Stennett, and afterwards published, entitled "Rabshakeh's Retreat," founded upon 2 Kings xix. 27, 28. The design of Mr. Stennett was to rouse the people to a sense of the national sins; to check the unmanly and pusillanimous panic which had struck the nation on the partial successes which had been obtained by the Pretender;* and to show that it was their duty "to act more becoming the characters of *Christians* and of *Englishmen.*" I feel compelled to extract from this sermon the part in which the moral state of the nation is depicted, because it exhibits this minister, so distinguished for his loyalty, as the faithful servant

* This refers to his taking possession of Perth, on September 4; and of the City of Edinburgh, on September 17; the defeat of the royal army at Preston Pans, on September 21; and the surrender of Carlisle on November 21.

of Christ; as a watchman upon the walls of Zion, blowing the trumpet, and giving the alarm with no uncertain sound; and because it proves that though the preacher enjoyed the personal friendship of the monarch, and had many friends at Court, yet that he was not a *courtly* preacher. "The Assyrian invasion," says Mr. Stennett, "was at a time when, notwithstanding the many sins of Judah complained of by the prophets, reformation had in some good degree prevailed among them; and I wish I could continue the parallel [between Judah and England]. But, alas! in the enjoyment of far greater advantages of light and knowledge than the *Jews* could ever boast of, has not atheism and a general contempt of divine Providence prevailed in this nation? What laboured attempts have been made to destroy the evidence of divine revelation! and how has it been abused by the mockery of the pens, as well as the tongues, of profane men! Under privileges and obligations infinitely superior to theirs, have not all orders of men corrupted their way among us? How is the whole land corrupted with blasphemy and profaneness; with drunkenness and lewdness! What fraud and oppression, what falsehood and perjury; what unpunished enormities every where prevail! What iniquities, which would have made heathens blush, are openly practised in this great metropolis; and what an utter contempt of piety and practical religion is almost every where to be found! How is the dignity of our ancient and noble families stained by the luxury and effeminacy of their posterity! Many of the great pillars of our liberties among the great were, in times past, men fearing God, and not ashamed of the gospel of *Christ;* but how is the glory tarnished, and how are many of their estates wasted, by the riot of their successors, and by those that practise upon their lusts, and cheat them in their base and unmanly diversions! What encouragement is given to every new-invented contrivance to excite and encourage the vicious

temper of the nation; and how do the low vulgar copy after the great!

"Nor is this dreadful charge to be brought only against those who have utterly forsaken God; but, alas! they who make profession to have separated themselves from the wicked, have, I fear, almost filled up the cup of our national guilt. The dangerous errors which abound among them, and deeply affect the glory of divine grace, the honour of the great Saviour of the church, and the Spirit of God; such as strike at the only provision that is made for the salvation of men, in the atonement of *Christ*, and his righteousness, and the work of his Spirit in the soul;—and the abuse of all this grace, by many who turn it into wantonness;—are dreadful evidences of our defection. So that, while some of our teachers are perpetually laying foundations, and erecting no buildings upon them, others are continually building without taking any care of the basis; while some set up practical religion in opposition to the doctrines of it, and despise most of its principles as idle speculations, others are sweating about points of mere controversy, and warm persuasions of the mind, to the great neglect of the genuine fruits of faith, and the best evidence of it in the growing purity of our hearts and lives. In a word, how do pride and envy, covetousness and formality, prevail! How are ordinances despised and neglected! How is religious conversation changed for fashionable, vain, and, I fear, vicious entertainments! How is family religion laid aside; and how are the duties of retirement, so necessary to improvement in piety and holiness, by some almost entirely neglected, and by others carelessly performed! How is our glory faded! *How is the gold become dim; how is the most fine gold changed!* Surely we have outdone *Judah* in these things; and do we imagine the Lord does not *see*, or that he is not jealous for his glory? And should we not conclude from hence, that he is *whetting his glittering*

sword against so provoking a people, and that *his hand* is about to take *hold of judgment?*"

Then, to encourage the people, and to rouse the spirit of the nation, the animated preacher proceeds:—"God observes the cruelty and rage of our enemies. He sees that their present design is most unjust and barbarous. It is not only to touch our liberties, to bring us under tribute, and some degree of oppression;—but this attempt, like that of the Assyrian host, was designed utterly to destroy and lay waste our properties; to turn *this fruitful land into a wilderness;* and to overwhelm all that has rendered us the envy of the nations round about us, in one common ruin; to exchange our happy enjoyment of wealth and freedom, for that poverty and slavery which is the certain concomitant of *French* power; and the pure religion of the Scriptures, for that which is more contrary to all reason and revelation than the vilest inventions of the heathen nations.

"And what plea can be used on the part of our enemies for such an attempt as this? They tell us, indeed, that our kings have a divine and absolute right over us; that it is hereditary, and indefeasible; and, however they use their authority, that it is not to be controlled or disputed: which is in effect to say, that this royal prerogative entitles them to the same power over this great nation as every gentleman in it has over his horses and dogs; that the people were made for the prince, and not the prince appointed for them; that our Kings have an unalienable right to our estates and our labours, to our wives and our children, to our lives and our consciences; that, though they break through all the laws of reason, religion, and their country,—though they arbitrarily seize upon our substance, and abuse our wives and daughters,—though they subject our persons to the vilest drudgery of slaves,—and though they dispose of our lives at their pleasure, and, of what is still dearer, of our consciences too; yet they are accountable for all this to none but the great God, or to his vicegerent the *Pope*. And

they tell us that this *implement* of *France*, who is sent over to make this modest demand upon us, comes attended with all these unalienable powers.

"But not to insist on his doubtful birth, which indeed is almost demonstrated to be suppositious by the care which was taken by his pretended parents to prevent the presence of such evidence as, on that occasion of all others that had ever happened of the like kind, was become necessary: I say, not to insist on this; blessed be God, with the light of the gospel, we have received such notions of those liberties which were bought at so dear a rate by our forefathers, that we are not easily to be *entangled again with such a yoke of bondage* as this. The dictates of reason and revelation speak of no such indefeasible right in any man; and the histories of all nations show, that these principles have every where, more or less, been obliged to give way to the common rights of mankind. Government is founded on contract; and as those subjects who break through the fundamental laws of it, suffer justly as traitors to their prince, and cannot convey to posterity what they have forfeited themselves; so if kings break through the fundamental engagements they entered into by their coronation oaths, they righteously forfeit their dignity and their power,—and their posterity, in such cases, will always surely be glad of some better title to succession than this pretended unalienable inheritance.

"And what tribute do we owe to this *blessed* family, of which this person pretends to be immediately descended, that we should be willing to make a sacrifice of ourselves and our posterity, our liberties, and our religion, to their descendants, merely because of the nearness of their blood! Did not the first of them, by a most weak and iniquitous abuse of the power to which he was raised, lay a foundation for all that misery and bloodshed that followed on the tyrannical improvements in government which attended the second? And what national blessings were imported from France with the restoration of

the third, but atheism, luxury, and lewdness; a waste of public faith, and public treasure; a servile subjection to French power, and French money; an encouragement to every sort of wickedness, and to popery, the worst of all; a persecution of the best principles, and the best men among us? And if we come down to the pretended father of him, who has now sent us a summons to submit our necks to the yoke that he has prepared for us; was not his short reign made up of one continued open violation of the oath he took when he ascended the throne; of a series of attempts to dispense with our laws, and to engross our properties; to establish popery, and to deprive us at once of all the traces of liberty that were left? And thus, as Papists have not been ashamed to lay it down as a public maxim, that they are obliged to keep *no faith with heretics*; so these princes have successively shown, that they apprehended they were under no obligations to keep any with subjects. And can there be any merit in this? Can a pretended near alliance to such princes as these give a man any just title to a compliment of those liberties, which the divine Providence, at the glorious revolution, under the conduct of our great deliverer William III. so miraculously wrested out of their hands?

"It has been often made appear, that a Papist is more incapable of governing this nation than an ideot or a lunatic; and, blessed be God, an experience now of near threescore years of sweet liberty, ever since the abdication of this lawless tyrant, and under a settlement of government established by the wisest counsels, by the united agreement of both houses of parliament, and the consent of clergy and laity, and of all ranks of men among us; a government confirmed by the most solemn oaths and appeals to heaven, defended by the blood of thousands of our brave countrymen, owned and guaranteed by the greatest powers on earth, and blessed with such an increase of riches and such a continuation of civil and religious liberty abroad and at home, and such success abroad as no nation ever enjoyed be-

fore ; I say, such an experimental conviction as this will never suffer us to go back again to Egypt, without such a struggle as is worthy in some measure the descendants of our brave ancestors."

To encourage his auditory to the most determined and persevering resistance, the preacher adds ; "God has already put his hook in the nose of the leader of this rebellion, and his savage followers ; he has put his bridle into their lips ; their declarations and manifestoes have been spread before the God of heaven ; and by the order of parliament treated, amidst the acclamations of this great metropolis, with the contempt which the treason contained in them deserves. Few have had inclination or temerity enough to join them in their inroad upon this southern part of the kingdom. They have been left to commit such excesses, especially in their return, as have given the nation a proper warning of what they must expect if they were to succeed. Some of their officers and stores of war have fallen into our hands by sea ; and when this northern rabble, under their French and popish commanders, were saying, they would *pursue, and overtake, and divide the spoils* of a free and happy nation ; on the approach of the brave Duke of Cumberland, with a few of those troops which humbled France in the fields of Dettingen, and put their monarch into no small fear at Fontenoy, they have been driven back with shame and precipitation, by the way by which they came."

In concluding his discourse, Mr. Stennett says, "Let us be humble under the mighty hand of God ; and while we are *girding on our arms*, and *learning military skill*,—in order to defend ourselves against insurrections at home, and invasions from abroad, let us attend strictly to the Christian discipline, and put on *the whole armour of God ;* let us labour continually, and with the greatest zeal and vigilance, to suppress and mortify our own corruptions, and resist all invasions made by the enemies of our souls on our spiritual concerns. And in the strength

of the Lord, let us set up our banners against the enemies of the peace of these kingdoms. Our cause is good; it is the cause of God, of righteousness, of truth, and of liberty. Many of our ancestors have bravely fought, and bravely bled, in this quarrel. Long experience has taught us, that popery and true liberty are incompatible; and when our religious and civil freedom is gone, what is there left for a *Christian* or an *Englishman?*

"What can you expect, my brethren and fellow subjects, from an invader, bred up in the policy of *France* and the religion of *Rome;* fired by revenge for what he is taught by the *father of lies,* and the *mother of harlots,* to be the unjust expulsion of his pretended father; sworn to subject you to the *Pope;* and bound by every tie that can bind a popish bigot, to reduce you to the yoke of France? Shall the pure knowledge and worship of God, happily planted in, and spread through this blessed land, give way to the absurdity, idolatry, ignorance, and blasphemies of popery? Will you exchange your Bibles for Latin missals, and the legends of lying monks? Will you suffer the temples of the Lord to become once more the habitations of cursed idols, of profane altars, and of antichristian priests? Can we read over the records of popish cruelty, which are plentifully to be found in the histories of all the nations, where any reformation from their blind and ignorant doctrines has been attempted; can we reflect upon the millions of poor *Indians,* who were murdered in *America,* under the blasphemous pretext of saving their souls; on the torrents of blood which were shed in the massacres of *France* and *Ireland;* on the fires kindled in this land by the cruel and unnatural fathers of that accursed church, in which they burnt alive some of the holiest, humblest, best of men, that ever lived in this or any other nation; on the rage of popish princes, and popish priests, that the innocent blood of no age or sex, no not that of tender infants at the breast and in the womb, could ever sa-

tisfy; on the inquisition, with its racks and gibbets, its dungeons and its fires; a contrivance of theirs, a contrivance the most artfully and wickedly levelled against all truth and justice, and the liberties of mankind, of any that were ever proposed, or ever executed;—can we, I say, recollect these things, and refuse any assistance we can give, to prevent such an introduction of most execrable mischiefs on ourselves, our country, and our posterity?

"Let none of us be ensnared by the fair promises of *Papists*, whose religion not only allows of lying and equivocation, but obliges its votaries to it, when the service of the bloody prostitute, their mother, requires it;—a church, one of whose fundamental maxims is *to break all faith with heretics;* a maxim which has not only been practised by foreign princes, but in the most flagrant manner by the two last professed Papists, who, for the sins of this nation, for a season possessed the throne of it.

"Our laws are of our making, and they have a free course. We have a Prince on the throne, given us by the apparent hand of heaven, the greatest and the best Prince in the world; who has, during the whole course of his reign, made the laws and our welfare the rules of his government; who has always been ready to hazard his precious life for our preservation; and who can have no enemy in the world but for his attachment to the protestant cause, and his successful interposition in the defence of the liberties of *Europe*; who never willingly injured one of his subjects; and the greatest blemish of whose government has been, the mercy he has extended to some of those wretches, who are now seeking his crown and his life.

"He has gloriously devoted himself and his family to the defence of his dear people. May his people, in grateful return, constantly and cheerfully maintain his just rights, and the succession in his illustrious house! May they readily part with their treasure, and, if called to it, their blood, in support of

his throne; and for their own sakes, for the sake of religion, freedom, and their dear posterity, most readily unsheath their swords, in the strength of heaven, and never put them up again till these unnatural rebels at home are suppressed, and these invaders from abroad are thoroughly made sensible of the folly and wickedness of their attempt; and till, with the help of God, the ambitious French fermentor of this mischief is brought within due bounds! May such success attend our prayers *and our swords*, as shall show to the whole world, that the Lord himself is our God, and the great captain of our salvation!"

Had this address, on such a trying occasion, been delivered at the head of an army, by a general in military uniform, instead of being uttered in a proscribed *conventicle*, by an *Anabaptist* teacher, it would have ranked with, if not have been considered as far superior to, the most able military harangues (most of them composed for them by others after the battle was over) that are attributed to the famous generals of Carthage or of Rome. What can be produced of Hannibal or Cæsar, which breathes more heroic ardour, more patriotic zeal, more determined devotedness to the welfare of their country, more cool and deliberate enthusiasm? What can be produced more eloquent, or more chaste; more comprehensive, or more concise; that contains more of the thoughts that breathe, and the words that burn,—than this piece of Christian heroism and constitutional loyalty? It is said that when Cicero addressed the Romans, the people left the senate admiring the orator; but that when Demosthenes harangued the Athenians, they rose with incensed indignation against the invader of their country, crying with one voice, "*Down with Philip.*" A similar effect was produced upon the congregation which Mr. Stennett addressed: they unsheathed their swords; and the meeting-house, which had been erected for a popish chapel, and had been used for the idolatry of the mass, and the

absurdities of transubstantiation, was now converted to a place for training men to military discipline, who were determined to shed their blood, if that were necessary, to defend a British king, and a protestant government, against French ambition, and popish tyranny.*

The King knew how to distinguish between his friends and his enemies. The following sentiments, uttered in the King's speech to parliament, Oct. 17, 1745, must have been very galling to *some* of his *protestant* subjects!—"I have," said his Majesty, "throughout the whole course of my reign, made the laws of the land the rule of my government, and the preservation of the constitution in the church and state, and the rights of my people, the main end and aim of my actions. It is, therefore, the more astonishing, that any of my protestant subjects, who have known and enjoyed the benefits resulting from them, and heard of the imminent dangers these kingdoms were wonderfully delivered from, by the happy revolution, should, by any arts and management, be deluded into measures that must at once destroy their religion and liberties, introduce popery and arbitrary power, and subject them to a foreign yoke."

The awkward dilemma to which the parliament were reduced after the rebellion was over, respecting the protestant Dissenters, is indeed very affecting; and but for its relation to the sacred rights of conscience, would be highly amusing. The sentiments of that eminent statesman, the late Right Honourable Charles James Fox, on this subject, are worthy of being recorded in this place. In his speech on the repeal of the Test

* The above statement rests on the authority of my friend George Bagster, Esq. late of Pancras, nearly fifty years a worthy deacon of the church in Eagle-street. He had it from an old person who was a member of the church in Wild-street at the time, and who also said that they were resolved to join the *royal standard* as soon as it should be hoisted.

Act, on March 2, 1790, Mr. Fox said, "A candid examination of the history of Great Britain, would, in his opinion, be favourable to the Dissenters. In the rebellions in 1715 and 1745, this country was extremely indebted to their exertions. During those troublesome periods they had acted with the spirit and fidelity of British subjects, zealous and vigilant in defence of the constitution; at both these periods they stood forward the champions of British liberty, and obtained an eminent share in repelling the foes of the *House of Hanover*. Their exertions then were so magnanimous, that he had no scruple to assert, that to their endeavours we owe the preservation of the church and state. What was the reward they obtained? We generously granted them a pardon for their noble exploits, by passing an act of indemnity in their favour. Gentlemen should recollect, that at the times alluded to, the high-churchmen did not display much gallantry, for many appeared perplexed and pusillanimous. Hence the superior glory of the Dissenters, who, regardless of every danger, had boldly stood forth in defence of the rights and liberties of the kingdoms.—The Dissenters, regardless of the foolish acts existing against them, drew their swords in defence of their fellow-subjects, *and made the scale immediately preponderate* in our favour. The church, as a very liberal encouragement for their achievements, adopted the plan already described, by passing an act of indemnity or pardon, *for the heinous crime of defending the constitution!*"

An Address from the general Body of Dissenting Ministers in London was presented to the King, "upon account of the late glorious victory over the rebels," at Culloden, by William Duke of Cumberland.

The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers in and about the Cities of London and Westminster, was presented June 25, 1746.

"May it please your Majesty,

"We your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, humbly beg leave to approach your Majesty's presence, to offer our sincerest and warmest congratulations for the happy suppression of that impious and unnatural rebellion, which hath been excited and carried on by ungrateful and perjured men, in favour of an outlawed, abjured, and popish Pretender.

"How just were our fears at the unexpected progress of this wicked attempt; and to what substantial miseries must we have been reduced, had God, for our sins, permitted it finally to prosper! Your Majesty's just and equitable government, and in this every dear and valuable interest belonging to us as men, Christians, and protestants, were the sacred objects immediately struck at, and the sacrifices intended to be made to the ambition and perfidy of France, the superstition and cruelty of Rome, and the presumptuous claims of the desperate and worthless invader of your Majesty's dominions.

"The seasonable and entire victory with which God hath blessed your Majesty's arms, is attended with so many happy consequences, not only to these kingdoms, but to the Protestant religion and the liberties of Europe, as will never be forgotten, whilst we know how to value the inestimable blessings it hath secured; and well deserves all the most grateful and public acknowledgments to Almighty God, that a people doomed to ruin, and saved by him from destruction, is capable of returning.

"The choice of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, to be at the head of your Majesty's forces on this important occasion, is the noblest demonstration of your Majesty's high regard for the national welfare, and that in your royal breast the private affection of a father is taught to give way to the public good; and will transmit the remembrance of your Ma-

jesty to all future ages under the most honourable character that a king can bear,—the friend, the father of your people. And how distinguished is your Majesty's happiness, that the freeing of these kingdoms from outrage, sedition, and rebellion, was by Providence reserved for this illustrious royal youth, early treading the paths of glory, and formed under your great example to be a scourge to your Majesty's and his country's enemies, and a general blessing to these favoured kingdoms!

"That your Majesty may long live, beloved and honoured by all your subjects, feared and submitted to by all your enemies, and be, under God, continued the guardian of liberty, and the protector of true religion; that all your Majesty s blessings may be hereditary, your honours descend to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and the succession to your imperial crown never fail in your august family; these, Sir, are our fervent prayers, and of all who wish well to themselves, or have any just concern for the safety and happiness of their posterity."

To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:—

"I THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONGRATULATIONS ON THE SUCCESS OF MY ARMS, UNDER THE COMMAND OF MY SON, THE DUKE, AGAINST THE REBELS; I AM TRULY SENSIBLE OF THE ZEAL WHICH YOU HAVE SHOWED, UPON ALL OCCASIONS, FOR THE SUPPORT OF MY GOVERNMENT; AND YOU MAY DEPEND UPON THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION."*

The 9th of October, 1746, was "appointed by his Majesty for a national thanksgiving to Almighty God for the suppression of the late unnatural rebellion." Mr. Joseph Stennett published a sermon preached by him on that occasion, entitled, "A

* Gentleman's Magazine, vol. xvi. p. 327.

Thanksgiving Sermon for the Victory at Culloden." This was founded upon Ezek. xxxv. 10, 11. He thus designates the deliverance which God had wrought for England—"A deliverance that has saved us from the heaviest and basest chains that France itself could forge for our liberties, and from that most accursed of all abominations which Rome has long waited to impose upon our consciences; a deliverance which has defended and established the throne of the worthiest and best of princes, which has secured the most happy constitution in the world, and preserved to each of us, and to our posterity, every thing that can be dear to Protestants, and a free people." He adds, "The loss of that battle would have been this; we and our posterity must have worn a yoke, the weight of which must have equalled all the brave actions of our fathers in defence of our religion and liberties, and all our own attempts to preserve them. We must have been slaves to *Rome*, to *France*, and to the base and even the degenerate *pretenders* to a succession of tyrants, who would have torn our laws in pieces, subverted our happy constitution, wrested our Bibles out of our hands, and filled our temples with the most wicked of all priests, and the most abominable of all idols. Ten thousand miseries must have been our lot, and that of our posterity."

When the peace with France in 1748 was concluded, it was proposed, in a meeting of the General Body of Ministers, to present an address of congratulation on that account. This motion was negatived, but they were unanimous in expressing their pleasure and gratitude on the safe arrival of the King at his palace, and in his kingdom. This was published in the London Gazette.

"*St. James's, February* 11, 1748-9. The following Address of the protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the cities of London and Westminster, has been presented to his Majesty by

the Rev. Henry Miles, D. D. attended by several of his brethren, being introduced by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, one of his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

"To the King's most excellent Majesty.

"*The humble Address of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the Cities of London and Westminster.*

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Protestant Dissenting Ministers, in and about the Cities of London and Westminster, humbly approach your sacred person with our most affectionate congratulations, and with the warmest sense of the divine goodness, on your Majesty's safe return to your British dominions, after the happy issue of your vigilant and unwearied labours to restore the tranquillity of Europe.

"Though God, for our sins, has not permitted us to reap all the advantages which we might otherwise have expected, from the war in which your Majesty has been so justly and so necessarily engaged; yet, during the course of it, the whole world has been witness to the hereditary courage and firmness of your royal mind, to the bravery of your troops, and to the success of your naval force. And when we reflect upon your Majesty's zeal for the liberties of mankind, together with your just resentment of any invasion of the rights of your crown, which are always inseparable from those of your subjects; we can never enough admire the moderation and paternal goodness which have induced your Majesty to embrace the first opportunity of entering into measures to stop the effusion of human blood, and prevent the other dreadful calamities of war.

"It remains that your people make a right improvement of this present happy situation; and may your Majesty's great example engage every rank of men among us to cultivate those

generous, peaceful, and charitable virtues which are most truly amiable in themselves, and abundantly recommended by the example of Christ.

"For our parts, we take leave, on this occasion, to renew our assurances to your Majesty, that we are determined in our several stations, and as far as our influence may reach, most diligently and constantly to promote that unfeigned and steadfast loyalty and affection to your Majesty, which by the blessing of God may best tend to secure all the advantages we enjoy under your just and gentle administration.

"That your Majesty's most precious life may be long preserved; that true religion, the greatest glory of human nature, and the strongest bond of human society, may always flourish under your royal patronage; that the hearts of your Majesty's subjects may be every day more firmly united in their attachment to your person and government; and that the protestant succession in your illustrious house, may be continued down to our latest posterity, are the most ardent prayer of,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most humble, most faithful,

and most obedient subjects and servants.

"To which Address his Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious Answer.

"I THANK YOU FOR THIS LOYAL ADDRESS, AND HAVE A FIRM DEPENDENCE UPON YOUR STEADY ATTACHMENT TO MY PERSON AND GOVERNMENT. YOU MAY BE ASSURED OF THE CONTINUANCE OF MY PROTECTION."

The general Body of Ministers at the Library refused to congratulate the King respecting the terms on which the peace had been concluded. Mr. Joseph Stennett always loyal, protestant, and constitutional, preached a sermon at Little Wild-street, on the 25th of April, 1749, "the day appointed by his Majesty, for

a general thanksgiving to Almighty God for the peace." This was afterwards published: it was founded upon Psalm lxxxv. 8. Enumerating the reasons the nation had for thanksgiving, he says, "The balance of power in the empire is secured; Flanders is restored; Holland is rescued and preserved, and its great dangers have led it to fly to its most natural security, under the hereditary protection of a race of princes, who have been the guardians of the liberties of that commonwealth from its foundation. As to ourselves, the right of the best of kings, and the succession of it in his royal protestant line, on which every thing that is dear to us and our posterity depends, is again recognised by all the contracting powers; and his throne more effectually secured than ever, by the happy suppression of a most unnatural and dangerous rebellion; and by the provision of such a law, as is well calculated to destroy that jurisdiction of the little tyrants in the remotest part of this island, which has enslaved such multitudes of poor people, and for many ages rendered them the fit instruments to carry on the most desperate designs of their leaders, in order to destroy our constitution."

Having thus brought the reader to the close of these national struggles for protestantism and liberty, and shewn him the patriotic loyalty of the Baptists in common with all others of the protestant Dissenters, I shall now return to state some circumstances which relate to the internal state of the denomination.

The manner of preaching the gospel, by some of the Baptist ministers, to unconverted sinners, had been greatly altered during this reign. From the zeal which they displayed for the peculiar doctrines of Calvinism, and their tenaciousness for the sentiment that *salvation is of the Lord,* and by grace alone, without human endeavours, they were led into an extreme, so as to deny that all who hear the gospel are called to that exercise of repentance and faith which is connected with salvation; thus

taking the negative side of what was then called the modern question, "Whether it be the duty of all men to whom the gospel is published, to repent and believe in Christ?" So far as I have been able to discover, this subject had never been made a question by our ministers, previously to the end of the last reign.

In a letter signed by many of the London ministers, in 1675, (printed in the first volume,) p. 418, amongst whom were some very eminent divines, especially Mr. William Collins and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe, who wrote the Confession of Faith adopted by the General Assembly, in 1689, are the following sentiments:—"'Tis certain that no man can, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, either repent or believe; yet it will not therefore follow, that impenitency and unbelief are no sins: if these be sins, then the contrary must be their duty." And that their preaching was formed upon this model, there is abundant evidence. I shall first make a quotation from a sermon of Mr. Benjamin Keach, as an illustration of this observation. "Labour," says he, "to get a full sight and sense of your sins, and of your lost and undone condition by nature. Oh what a miserable creature hath sin made man, or rather man by sin made himself! Labour to get brokenness of heart. Oh strive to melt from the sight and sense of your iniquity!—Labour to get an interest in Jesus Christ. Oh that this opportunity might have some tendency this way! *Unless you believe that I am he*, saith Jesus Christ, *you shall die* in your sins. Soul, never rest and be satisfied, till thou canst say with Thomas, *My Lord and my God*, John xx. 28. Can you still stand it out against such precious patience, and offers of grace? Will you not yet open to Christ? Shall he cry and call unto you, and will you give him no entertainment? Can you close in with a better friend? How long hath he stood knocking at the door of your hearts! Was he not graciously calling upon you the last Lord's day? and now in mercy he is giving you another knock. Oh fear lest he depart!

Have you not let him stand till his *head was wet with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night?* Sinner, hasten to him, and open the door. Dost thou not hear that lovely voice that was spoken to the blind man, *Be of good comfort; rise, he calleth thee,* Mark x. 49. It may be you will ask, 'Where?' I'll tell thee. If thou art a weary and burdened soul, that feelest the weight of thy sin, there is a precious word spoken for thy sake, take hold of it, Matt. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* Oh the sweetness of the word, *Take it, and receive it.* Labour in the strength of Christ to oppose every sin. See that there be no sweet morsel hid, no *Delilah*; no pleasant nor profitable lust spared. Take heed you do not sin against the light; neglect no conviction of sin or duty."*

The reader need scarcely be informed, that the admired works of Mr. Bunyan, his Pilgrim's Progress and his Holy War, which are designed to represent the manner in which the unconverted are brought to repentance and faith by the ministry of the gospel, are all formed upon the same model. In the former of these, by the metaphor of the hen and her chickens, Mr. Bunyan represents the free invitations of the gospel to unconverted men, as well as the special grace of the Holy Spirit in making those calls efficacious to the conversion of the elect.

In the latter, if the reader will consult the manner in which the four captains, under the immediate command of the prince Emanuel, conducted the war to recover the lost town of Mansoul to the authority of its rightful Sovereign, and the entire failure of the enterprise, until the Prince subdued them by his love; he will find the same sentiments luminously and strongly illustrated.

* Mr. Keach's Sermon for Mr. John Norcot.

The same opinion is seen in others of the works of this eminent divine, especially in that beautiful little piece, "Come and welcome to Jesus Christ."

Mr. John Piggott, a most judicious and doctrinal preacher, thus addresses the unconverted in his funeral sermon, for Mr. Thomas Harrison. "Oh adore the patience and long suffering of God, that you are yet alive, and have one call more from the pulpit, and another very awful one from the grave of that person who used to fill it. His death calls upon you to repent, and turn to close with Christ, and make sure of heaven. Let me entreat you by all that is sacred, by the joys of heaven and the torments of hell, by the interests of your never dying souls, by Christ's bloody sweat in the garden, and agony upon the cross, that you immediately close with Christ, and receive him as offered in the gospel; submitting to his sceptre, as well as depending on his sacrifice; that you may eternally be lodged in the bosom of his love."

The first minister among the Baptists, so far as I have discovered, who adopted a different method, was Mr. John Skepp, who was settled about 1710, at Curriers' Hall, in London Wall, afterwards called Cripplegate meeting.

He had been a member of Mr. Hussey's church at Cambridge, and appears to have fully imbibed the scheme of doctrine advocated by his pastor in the work entitled, "God's operations of Grace, but no offers of Grace." This book was written expressly against all awakening applications to the consciences of the unconverted, with the avowed design of securing to the Holy Spirit the sole glory of converting and sanctifying the souls of the elect. And Mr. Skepp, it should seem, would not persuade sinners to listen to the calls of the gospel, lest he should despoil God of the honour of their conversion.

But Mr. Skepp must be heard in reference to this subject. "This way of reasoning," says he, "either with saints or sinners, is not to be discarded out of the ministry, nor slighted

or turned to another meaning; though, if I might be allowed freedom to speak, I think few handle these so usefully and distinctly as to keep themselves and others clear from *Arminianism*, in its notion of the creature's power and liberty of will to do all that is required of a sinner by the gospel ministry; and though they may not design this, yet the ignorant and unskilful part of their auditory perceive no difference between Calvinists and Arminians, when upon awakening and practical subjects. And I well remember, when I was very young, having learned the Assembly's Catechism, and read some confessions of faith, and doctrinal articles of the reformed churches, with their arguments against Papists and Arminians; I used to be stumbled at Arminian discourses, from such as were accounted strict Calvinists. I call them Arminian discourses; for it is not throwing in a few words, by way of a parenthesis, that will mend the matter, nor sufficiently atone for an hour's practical discourse in an Arminian dialect, where the Spirit's work, both as to previous renovation, or continued influences and assistance, is not so much as mentioned till just at last; and then with this Arminian, or Semi-pelagian close—'I know you cannot do these things of yourselves, unless God enable you; and therefore you must rely upon him, and earnestly beg divine assistance.' This then is what I say, that exhortations to duty, moral or religious, either to saints or sinners, enforced by proper arguments and reasonings, are not to be discarded, but carefully and distinctly used; whilst still we, agreeably to Scripture, maintain and defend the necessity of divine energy, or the Holy Spirit's work of renovation and efficacious grace; these things being not at all repugnant, but agreeable and consistent, as appears in these words of the apostle, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*, Phil. ii. 12, 13. Agreeably to which good St. Austin frequently prayed,

'Lord give what thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.'"

Had we not been previously acquainted with the system of this worthy minister, who doubtless thought he was securing to the Holy Spirit the sole glory of converting and sanctifying the souls of the elect, we should have been ready to inquire, What do those ministers whom Mr. Skepp charges with using an Arminian and Semi-pelagian dialect, say more than he himself has said, namely, that it is the work of ministers to exhort sinners to duty moral or religious, and to enforce those exhortations by arguments and reasonings, which he affirms is not to be neglected, &c. It is true, he says, that these reasonings with, and exhortations to, sinners, must be enforced by *proper* arguments, and be *carefully* and *distinctly* used. But was it modest in Mr. Skepp to be so certain that the Assembly of Divines, and the compilers of all the Reformed Creeds, and most other ministers, were all Arminians and Semi-pelagians, while they had always considered themselves to be Calvinists? and that calling upon unconverted sinners to *repent and believe the gospel*, to *repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance*, was not only consistent with the example of Christ and his apostles, but strictly accordant with, and not repugnant to, the doctrine of DIVINE ENERGY, or the Holy Spirit's work of renovation and efficacious grace! Did it follow, because Mr. Skepp could not reconcile the difficulties of total depravity and human accountability, that they were necessarily absurdities? or, because sinners are dead in trespasses and sins, that therefore the Divine command is not to be obeyed, and the inspired example to be imitated, in saying, *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light?* I shall here introduce the remarks of no mean critic, who, at the time he wrote them, was an orthodox minister: "Mr. Hussey's design," says Mr. Robinson, "and those of

other divines, who have adopted his method, was to secure to the Holy Spirit the sole glory of converting and sanctifying the souls of the elect. But other preachers, who use sober applications, are equally zealous to preserve the glory to God; and if the last may not use *applications*, lest they should rob God of the glory of sanctifying the heart, assuredly the former may not use *explications*, lest they should deprive God of the honour of enlightening or informing the mind. In both, *the means are ours, and the blessing his!* After all, those doctrinal Divines, who affect to discharge their office fully, by narrating and reasoning, and who reject persuasions, should not forget that reasoning is *persuasion;* and that they themselves slide almost as often as any men, into personal application, especially in discussing certain favourite points of divinity. This remark is abundantly verified in Mr. Hussey's manuscript sermons, a hundred of which, I suppose, I have read; and I think I could exemplify it plentifully, were it necessary, from printed sermons of others, of his judgment on the article of *application.*"*

Mr. Skepp, it will be perceived, objects not to the employment of "arguments and reasonings," and "the enforcing of these with promises and threatenings," in the ministry of the gospel; which is "the blessed news and glad tidings of a salvation that is all of grace;" but he thought these were not "handled so usefully and distinctly as to keep clear from using the Arminian dialect!" Exhortations to religious duty, even to sinners, enforced by proper arguments and reasonings, are not to be discarded.† Very well. But should not Mr. Skepp have left his brother to his own judgment and conscience, as to the most proper way of enforcing the promises and threatenings? It should seem, from Mr. Skepp's book, that owing to

* Robinson's Claude, vol. ii. p. 327.

† Skepp's Divine Energy, &c. p. 57, 61, 62, 63.

a fear, lest he should apply these *improperly* to the cases of the unconverted, or lest the unskilful part of his auditory should perceive no difference between a Calvinist and Arminian, when upon awakening and practical subjects, he neglected *applications* of the promises and threatenings of the gospel to unconverted sinners altogether; and rather left them to infer they had no share in the blessings of a gospel ministry, than even to be suspected of using a Semi-pelagian address! I may, perhaps, be told that, at the close of his book of 318 pages, (written to prove what no *Calvinist* ever doubted, that DIVINE ENERGY is absolutely necessary to renew the heart of an unconverted sinner before he will, with his heart, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,) Mr. Skepp "gives some cautions to such souls, as have in some measure found and experienced a power attending the ministry of the gospel reaching their hearts;" that he cautions them "to have a care of those ways, those practices, those customs and companions that may have a tendency to harden them again;" to "avoid the ways of sin and vice;" to "take care not to grieve that Spirit which hath began thus to work: quench it not, grieve it not, and resist it not." "These are," he adds, "cautions given by the Holy Ghost, and they are not needless. They are suited to such as are under a begun work of the Holy Spirit; that they do not turn their backs upon him, that speaketh thus in a peculiar manner to their souls; and saith to them in particular,—*To you is this gospel sent;* let the language of your soul be, *I will hear what God the Lord will say unto me. He will speak peace to his people, but let them not turn again to folly.* Sin is of a hardening nature; and one sinner hath destroyed much good. Though many have begun well, and have given some hopes to others that the work of God was begun in their souls; yet in a little time, by giving way to vicious company, *they have been swallowed up in sin,* they have quite lost their profession; I still believe that the foundation of God standeth sure; he will

bring them back again, but it will be with broken bones."* Thus in his care to avoid Scylla, he runs upon Charybdis; and rather than be suspected by them of holding the Arminian notion of the self-determining power of the will in conversion, he encourages them to conclude that, though "they are swallowed up in sin," yet, having once "given some hopes to others that the work of God was begun upon their souls," this was sufficient evidence of their being the elect of God, and they might calculate upon being at last eternally saved, *yet so as by fire!* But is this *saying to the wicked, it shall be ill with him?* Is it not rather encouraging mere *stony-ground hearers* to conclude, notwithstanding the declarations of the Saviour to the contrary, that they have received the seed of the gospel into good and honest hearts; and though they bear nothing but thorns and briers, they will at last be owned by him as the righteous; and saved by him from the desert of sin, though they were left under its dominion? A conclusion this so diametrically opposed to the design of the gospel, and to the effects of the *Divine energy* upon the heart, that it is infinitely more to be dreaded, than to be suspected of using an Arminian dialect, when employing *the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth.*

I have been the more particular in remarking upon the tendency of Mr. Skepp's *non-invitation, non-application* scheme, because it was by him introduced among the Baptists; and having thus traced a river that has plentifully watered our churches, to its source, I shall now proceed to trace it in its progress.†

* Skepp's Divine Energy, p. 314.

† Of the different ways of addressing the unconverted among Calvinistic ministers, I recommend the following as an illustration. There were, in a certain kingdom, two brothers, both of whom filled the office of herald at court, and each of whom was equally attached to the Sovereign, and professed an equal regard to his laws, and equal zeal for the honour of his

Mr. John Brine succeeded Mr. Skepp at Currier's Hall, about the year 1730. He was a minister of strong mind and laborious habits. His manner of preaching fully accorded with that of

government; but who maintained different opinions as to the best manner of making his subjects acquainted with his royal proclamations.

These brothers, for the sake of distinction, I shall name *Calvinian*, and *Calvinius*. Calvinian was much the eldest, and Calvinius was young, and had been but lately invested with his office.

It happened that a rebellion having broken out in a province of the King's dominions, and the rebels having been defeated and overcome, some of them had sued for mercy, and had obtained it instantly; but there were others who still persisted in justifying their rebellion, and in thinking and even speaking seditiously, and in acting traiterously against the King.

It was to reduce these to an acknowledgment of their unjust thoughts and rebellious practices, that Calvinian and Calvinius were sent in the character both of *heralds*, to proclaim the terms upon which their reconciliation with the sovereign might be effected, and of *ambassadors*, to entreat them to be reconciled to the King. The terms were, that whosoever would sue for pardon in the name of the King's Son, who had obtained great merit in the prosecution of the war, and who had great affection towards the rebels, should be sure to obtain it.

On its being known that the brothers had arrived, and for what purpose, a great multitude assembled at the chief place of concourse, at the entering of the gates of the city: among these were both the pardoned, and the contumacious rebels.

Calvinius first addressed the assembly. "The rebellion," said he, "in which you have been found against your lawful Prince, was unprovoked, unjust, and highly aggravated. You who have been pardoned already, owe much to the unmerited clemency of your Prince, out of respect to whose merits you were reprieved: his favour has been both rich and free towards you. I know, indeed, that his thoughts were towards you before you ever thought of seeking for mercy. As for those who are still rebels at heart, though they cannot injure their Sovereign, they are the children of a notorious rebel, whose whole inheritance was lost for his rebellions. They were born with a disposition to hate the King; they have, as if it were their very nature, always plotted against his authority,

his predecessor, as he contented himself with what he considered clear statements of doctrinal truth, without making any application of his subjects.

and refused to be in subjection to his laws; and as they have disobeyed the laws of the land, so they have no power to believe and receive the proclamation of mercy now made known before them. It may be, the thoughts of the King's heart are towards some of them as they were towards you; and then they will some time or other be reconciled to him; but should that not be the case, what I say, and what they can do, will all amount to nothing. Oh that the King's heart might be inclined towards them! Awful will be their condition, should they be executed for their rebellions; as they certainly will be if they repent not of their conduct, and do not believe what I have said about the merits of the Prince; for they are already found guilty, and are exposed to the fierce anger of the King."

Calvinian now spoke, and with tears of compassion, and expressions of gratitude towards his Prince, who had sent him on such a gracious mission to the rebels, he exclaimed,—

With praise I view the awful scene,
My bowels yearn o'er guilty men;
And fain my pity would reclaim,
And snatch the fire-brands from the flame!

Then looking towards the rebels, he said, "To you, oh men, I call; my voice is directed to you. Hear now, ye rebels; hear, and your souls shall live. You have heard what Calvinius has said of the guilt and just punishment of your father, and the correct statement which he has given of your rebellious disposition and conduct towards the King. You have heard too how he has magnified the merits of the Prince, and the unmerited friendship which the King has shown towards these your fellow-rebels, who, having confessed their guilt, and sued for pardon in the name of the Prince, have freely obtained it! But you are still rebellious, though you know all this. Suffer me to *expostulate* with you. Are your hands so strong, that you think of resisting the execution of his laws? or can your heart endure the penalty to which your rebellions have exposed you? Permit me to *advise* you. Give up your rebellious practices; withdraw from the wicked society to which you belong; and change your thoughts respecting the laws of the King. They are not grievous laws,

In his time the Modern Question* became a subject of con-

as you have imagined, nor is the King an unjust monarch. Acknowledge that your rebellions were unprovoked; do not attempt to justify yourselves; but cast yourselves upon the mercy of the King. Do not suffer yourselves to be persuaded that the King is not willing to shew mercy; he waits to be gracious, and he delighteth in mercy. He sent his Son, the Prince, into the war, on purpose to discover his mercy towards the rebellious province of which you are natives. He has already pardoned many who were as guilty as you are. He has commanded me to tell you, and he has condescended to appeal to his crown and dignity for its truth, that he has no pleasure that the rebels should die, and that he would much rather sign a *reprieve* than a *warrant of execution*. I most earnestly *persuade* you, as you have reason to dread his anger, and as you are encouraged to expect his mercy, to forsake the tents of these wicked men, and cast yourselves at the feet of your Sovereign. The merits of the Prince present sufficient grounds for his being reconciled towards you, and sufficient reasons for you to be reconciled to the King. I *pray* you, therefore, and *entreat* you, and earnestly *beseech* you in the name of the Prince, that you be *reconciled* unto the King. *Repent* of your rebellions; *believe* the royal proclamation; *trust* to the mediation of the Prince; present a humble and honest *petition* for mercy; and you will find that our King will abundantly pardon. He will receive you very graciously, and will forgive all your rebellions, and restore you to your former rights of citizenship. But I must further tell you, that if you despise this his royal proclamation, if you reject the mediation of the Prince, and if you continue in your rebellions, there is every reason to fear you will be destroyed by his power, as your guilt will be very much aggravated; and your end will then be according to your rebellious deeds!"

Query. *Which address of these two most resembles the manner in which Christ and the apostles preached the gospel?*

* I do not know when the modern question began to be so called; but it was probably in a pamphlet written by Mr. Maurice of Rowell, perhaps about 1735, entitled, "A Modern Question modestly stated." To this appeared an answer, written by Mr. Lewis Wayman of Kimbolton, an Independent minister almost idolized by the Baptists, entitled, "A further Inquiry after Truth." Dr. Abraham Taylor seems to have noticed this last with disapprobation, if not to have written against it, in his

troversy among the Baptists. About 1740 a Mr. Gutteridge, a Baptist of Oundle, wrote a piece to prove, "that it was the duty of all men to whom the gospel was preached to repent and believe in Christ." In this work, it is supposed there were some things really verging towards Arminianism. Mr. Brine, in 1743, addressed a letter to a friend, which he published, entitled, "The Arminian Principles of a late Writer refuted." Though Mr. Brine denied the position above mentioned, yet he repeatedly allows, what no man of reading could dispute, that many sound Calvinists had embraced it,—and says to his friend, concerning Mr. Gutteridge, "Had not this writer attempted to build up Arminianism upon the foundation of the opinion of evangelical repentance and saving faith, being the duties of unregenerate men, I had not given you and the world this trouble; for though I apprehend that that opinion is not to be supported by Scripture and the analogy of faith, it seems not to me to be of such consequence, but that persons differing in this point, may fully agree about the doctrines of the grace of God."

In 1752, another pamphlet was published on the affirmative side, by Mr. Alvey Jackson, a Baptist minister, in Yorkshire. This piece was edited by Dr. Joseph Stennett; and Mr. Brine

"Address to Young Students in Divinity, by way of Caution against some Paradoxes in Divinity, which lead to doctrinal Antinomianism." And afterwards Mr. Maurice wrote and published "The Modern Question affirmed and proved," May 5, 1739, with a recommendation by Mr. Thomas Bradbury, and a testimony on the same side by fifty-two members of his church, dated Aug. 31, 1737. Dr. Gill also answered the same publication of Dr. Taylor's, in a pamphlet entitled, "The Necessity of Good Works unto Salvation considered; occasioned by some Reflections and Misrepresentations of Dr. Taylor, in a Pamphlet of his lately published, called an Address to Young Students in Divinity, &c." It is probable Mr. Hussey was the first person who maintained the negative side of the question. Mr. Wayman answered both Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Maurice's Second Book, in "A Defence of the further Inquiry after Truth, &c. 1739."

made some animadversions upon it, in his "Motives to Love and Unity among Calvinists differing in opinion." Mr. Johnson, of Liverpool, a Baptist of peculiar notions, published on the negative side, in reply to Mr. Jackson; but he carried matters to such an extravagant length, that Mr. Brine wrote again "to note and rectify the mistakes" of Mr. Johnson.*

Though Mr. Brine was free from the censoriousness of his predecessor, Mr. Skepp, yet he certainly preached upon the same *non-application, non-invitation* scheme. Even in sermons where the subjects, it might have been expected, would have led him to address the unconverted, on the necessity of repentance and faith, there is not a syllable addressed to them on any topic. The reader is referred to that entitled, "The chief of Sinners saved through Jesus Christ," from 1 Tim. i. 15, preached in 1747; and to another entitled, "The Glory of the Gospel considered," from 1 Tim. i. 12, preached in 1762.

Contemporary with Mr. Brine was that powerful and laborious writer, Dr. John Gill. For upwards of fifty years this eminent minister filled a public situation as the pastor of a respectable church in London; and for thirty years of that time he was one of the senior, and the presiding minister in all affairs relating to the denomination. He had a very high opinion of Mr. John Skepp, from whom he had derived some literary advantages, and whose work on Divine energy he reprinted in 1754, when the Doctor's recommendation was considered almost oracular among the Baptists. He had a strong personalaffection, too, for Mr. John Brine, whose spiritual father he had been at the early part of his ministry.

Dr. Gill did not write so strongly, perhaps, as Mr. Brine, upon what I consider the false Calvinistic scheme, though he was very zealous for the doctrine of justification before faith. Considering that what God had willed to perform, was actually

* Memoirs of the late Rev. Andrew Fuller, by Dr. John Ryland, p. 8, 9.

performed, he thought that God's decree to justify the elect, whom he had chosen in Christ, was their actual justification; and from hence it probably followed, as a necessary consequence, that he could not address the ungodly and unconverted, as being at that time without Christ. Whether this was the necessary result of his principles or not, it is certain he adopted the non-invitation scheme, and could preach whole sermons without saying, *But now God hath commanded all men every where to repent.* He never said to a wicked man, while his heart was set upon the gratification of his wicked passions,—*Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*, Acts viii. 22, 23. It appears, that neither the Doctor, nor his brethren, Messrs. Skepp or Brine, had so learned Christ as Paul and Peter had understood him.

Though Dr. Gill never professedly wrote against the affirmative side of the Modern Question; yea, though some things he wrote were considered as favouring the views of those who supported it; yet as it was well known that he thought with Mr. Brine upon that subject, it naturally followed, that their opinion produced a very powerful influence among the Baptist Ministers, and gave the tone to their preaching. And though the controversy was not much known among the people, yet, as a judicious and aged minister has well observed, "the preachers were too much restrained from imitating our Lord and his apostles, in calling on sinners to *repent and believe the gospel.* Many of these ministers, indeed, endeavoured to address the consciences of men, as far as their system would allow; and some of them could hardly refrain from expressing themselves inconsistently with their creed. They were aware that the divine law requires such obedience as no bad man will yield to it; but, though they considered all mankind as bound to love God supremely, they supposed that the faith connected with salvation could not be duty,

because Adam, as they thought, had not power (that is, occasion or opportunity) of believing in Christ."*

Though, as I have intimated, the manner in which Dr. Gill preached to sinners must have given the tone to that of some of our ministers, yet there were others, yea many, both in London and the country, who continued to *warn every man, and teach every man, in all wisdom, that they might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*

Of Dr. Gill's manner of preaching, the following specimen is extracted from one of the best of his printed sermons, the funeral sermon for Mr. Samuel Wilson, preached in 1750, third edition, from Acts xx. 28. "The doctrines the apostle chiefly insisted upon, during the whole of his ministry, were reducible to these two heads—*repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* God, against whom man has sinned, is the object of the one; and Christ, who is the Redeemer and Saviour, is the object of the other. Repentance must be towards God; it lies in a true sense of sin, and godly sorrow for it; in shame and blushing at it; and in owning and forsaking it; flowing from a view of the love of God, and of pardoning grace and mercy through Christ; attended with faith in him, and expecting grace and life, and salvation, by him. Faith has Christ for its object; and it is a believing in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; a

* Dr. Ryland's Memoirs of Mr. Fuller, p. 8, 9. The Doctor adds in a note on this part, "Yet Dr. Gill gives up this chief argument of Mr. Brine, in his *Cause of God and Truth*, p. 3, and p. 81, and says, 'That Adam, in a state of innocence, had a power of believing in Christ, and did believe in him as the second person in the Trinity, as the Son of God, cannot well be denied; since, with the other two persons, he was his Creator and Preserver, the knowledge of which cannot well be thought to have been withheld from him: and his not believing in him as the Mediator, Saviour, and Redeemer, *did not arise from any defect of power in him*, but from the state, condition, and situation in which he was, and from the nature of the revelation made to him!'"

looking to him, leaning on him, trusting in him, and expecting life and salvation from him. These two doctrines went together in Christ's ministry, and are what he ordered his disciples to teach, and which they did; endeavouring first to bring men to a sense of sin, and then encouraging them to believe in Christ. And this is the usual order of the Spirit's work upon the soul, through the ministry of the word; first to convince men of sin; then to work faith in their hearts, and take of the things of Christ, and show and apply them to their souls for their peace and comfort. And those doctrines were taught by the apostle, without respect to persons;—he testified them both to the *Jews and Greeks*."—Now this is certainly a correct statement of evangelical repentance and saving faith: but then there is no application of these sentiments so as to convince guilty sinners that except they repent they must perish; and that they cannot escape wrath if they continue to neglect so great a salvation.

It is not known at what precise period the Monthly Meetings of the London Associated Baptist Churches commenced. Crosby speaks of them as having been discontinued, when he wrote his fourth volume, in 1739. It seems however probable, that they were held soon after that period, as I find a minute dated June 21, 1748, of which the following is a copy:—"At a meeting of the Ministers and Deputies of the Particular Baptist Churches, held by adjournment at Blackwell's Coffee-house;—the minutes of the last meeting being read, the question was put,—whether there was due encouragement to continue the monthly meeting of prayer and preaching? Which being carried in the affirmative, it was resolved, That a list be now settled of the said meetings for the ensuing twelve months, at the following places." This list is a curiosity, it being the first which has been preserved.*

* The Baptist Monthly Meetings have been regularly continued, with but few interruptions, from that period. They have doubtless been pro-

LIST OF BAPTIST MONTHLY MEETINGS.

Time.	Place.	To begin.	To preach.	To pray.	To conclude.
1748 July	Mr. Biddle's, Deptford.	Mr. Townsend	Mr. Spurrier	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Biddle
August	Mr. Spurrier's, Limehouse.	Mr. Dew	Dr. Gill	Mr. Wilson	Mr. Spurrier
Sept.	Mr. Dew's, Great Eastcheap.	Mr. Braithwaite	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Anderson	Mr. Dew
Oct.	*Mr. Stennett's, Little Wild-street.	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Wallin	Mr. Spurrier	Mr. Stennett
Nov.	*Mr. Townsend's, (Sabbatarian,) Curriers'-hall.	Dr. Gill	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Dew	Mr. Townsend
Dec.	*Mr. Braithwaite's, Devonshire-square.	Mr. Wilson	Mr. Dew	Mr. Townsend	Mr. Braithwaite
1749 Jan.	Mr. Brine's, Curriers'-hall.	Mr. Spurrier	Mr. Anderson	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Brine
Feb.	*Mr. Thompson's Unicorn-yard.	Mr. Brine	Mr. Townsend	Dr. Gill	Mr. Thompson
March	*Mr. Anderson's, Swallow-street.	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Wilson	Mr. Brine	Mr. Anderson
April	*Dr. Gill's, Goat-yard.	Mr. Anderson	Mr. Brine	Mr. Wallin	Dr. Gill
May	*Mr. Wilson's, Prescot-street.	Mr. Townsend	Mr. Braithwaite	Mr. Dew	Mr. Wilson
June	Late Mr. Dawkes's	Mr. Thompson	Mr. Wallin	Mr. Stennett	Mr. Spurrier

ductive of good to the denomination, as they have promoted that familiar intercourse between the ministers and the principal members of the churches, which, in so large a city, they would not otherwise have enjoyed. It is hoped the Association will never be dissolved; and that successive ministers and deacons will manifest an ardent zeal to emulate their predecessors in these monthly meetings. The writer feels it humiliating to add, that five of the churches thus associated in 1748 have been dissolved. The seven that remain in the monthly meeting at the present time, are those marked with an asterisk.

It appears that the General Baptists had continued to hold their Associations both in London and the country. The only meeting of which any account is preserved, was held in London at Whitsuntide 1739.* Mr. John Maulden preached on the occasion, and received the thanks of the assembly for his appropriate discourse, and was requested to print it. The proceedings and deliberations were conducted with great unity, peace, and concord. Mr. Maulden was elected to the office of a messenger of the baptized churches.†

The state of our churches in 1750 may be judged of in some measure from the following statement of Dr. Gill:—"The harvest," says he, "is great, and faithful and painful ministers are few. There are scarcely any that naturally care for the estate and souls of men, and who are heartily concerned for their spiritual welfare: all comparatively seek their own things, their honour and applause from men, their ease, reputation, and riches; and none or few the things that are Jesus Christ's, or which relate to his honour, glory, kingdom, and interest in the world. And what adds to the sorrow is, that there are so few rising to fill the places of those that are removed; few that come forth with the same spirit, and are zealously attached to the truths of the everlasting gospel. Blessed be God, there is here and there one that promises usefulness, or otherwise the sorrow and grief at the loss of gospel ministers would be insupportable." He adds, "that very few ministers were zealously attached to the truths of the gospel; that errors and heresies of all kinds were rampant; that erroneous ministers did not, as formerly, "privily bring in damnable heresies, denying

* Crosby, vol. iv. p. 14.

† This office was that of a *superintendent* over the churches of a particular district. It answered to that of superintendent in the Lutheran churches. There were a few instances of persons filling such a station at the early part of the history of the Particular Baptists; but it was soon disused.

the Lord that bought them, but openly spread their poison, and propagated their wretched schemes with fury and rancour, charitably scattering fire-brands, arrows, and death; that there was scarcely an error or heresy that had appeared in the world from the first ages of Christianity, but what was revived, and no truth of the gospel but what was opposed and denied."*

Mr. John Ryland, who was at this time pastor of the church at Warwick, wrote, in the year 1753, an account of the Baptist churches in London, with a statement of the members in round numbers. From having lived in London, and been in communion with Mr. Brine's church, he may be supposed to have formed a tolerably correct judgment respecting the churches he has mentioned. The account is as follows:—

"December 27, 1753.

Pastors.	Place.	No. of Members.
MR. GILL,	Goat-street	150
—— BRINE,	Curriers'-hall	30
—— STENNETT,	Little Wild-street . .	60
—— WALLIN,	Maze-pond	100
—— ANDERSON,	Swallow-street . . .	60
—— DEW,	Great Eastcheap . . .	40
—— STEPHENS,	Devonshire-square . .	150
—— TOWNSEND,	Curriers'-hall, Sabbatarian	20

There were some other churches not mentioned by Mr. Ryland, at this period, viz.

DR. GIFFORD,	Eagle-street, probably .	150
Late MR. WILSON,	Prescot-street	150
—— MR. THOMPSON,	Unicorn-yard	60

The aggregate calculation of Mr. Ryland, of all the churches, was as follows:—

* Sermon for Mr. Samuel Wilson, p. 34.

In London 9 churches, averaged at 50 each . . .	450
East and south of London, 24 churches, at 40 . .	960
In the West, 18 churches, at 40	720
In South Wales, 20 churches, at 40	800
In North Wales, no Baptists.	
In the North of England, 50 churches, at 40 . . .	2000
	4930

Now, even admitting that this calculation was one-third deficient in number, and adding two-thirds more for hearers, who were not members, there could not have been 20,000 persons in all the Particular Baptist congregations in England and Wales. The General Baptists are not included; but their churches at that time were but few in number, and their congregations small and languishing.

There is no reason to doubt that our churches were far more prosperous and numerous at the Revolution in 1688, than at this period, sixty-five years afterwards; so that prosperity had indeed slain more than the sword.

It will not be difficult, perhaps, in the history of our London churches particularly, to ascertain some of the causes of this lamentable and obvious decline in the numbers of our denomination, notwithstanding liberty of conscience had been enjoyed in the mostexten sive way. Surely God must have had a controversy with the churches, so that *their sins had kept good things from them.* For the Lord has said, to vindicate the justice of his proceedings towards his church, *Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear,* Isa. lix. 1, 2.

It is a remarkable fact, and should be improved by all the ministers of the gospel, that while the leading men in the Baptist denomination had been preaching what Mr. Delaune calls "the hidden decrees of God, to the neglect of applying "practical duties to the hearts of their hearers;" while they were con-

tending most earnestly that there were an elect people, whom God would save through sanctification of the Spirit, and the belief of the truth, but without using the appointed means for bringing the sheep of Christ into his fold, by going after the strayed and the lost, and without enduring any thing for the elect's sake, that they might obtain the salvation which was in Christ Jesus with eternal glory; God was carrying on his own work, fulfilling his purposes of grace and mercy, accomplishing the number of the elect, and advancing his kingdom; and that by means which these good men thought unnecessary, by instruments whom they thought but babes in the knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, by the influence of principles they considered to be erroneous, and by a kind of preaching which they called an 'Arminian dialect,' and 'Semi-pelagian addresses.' The reflecting reader will anticipate, that I allude to that astonishing man, that laborious and successful minister of Christ, George Whitefield, and his contemporaries.* Covered with obloquy, and loaded with reproach; sneered at by the profane, and discouraged by many even of the pious; unknown by his mother's own children, and treated with coolness and neglect by some of his brethren in Christ; cast out by the Established Church, and scarcely admitted into the pulpits of Dissenters; he endured the pelting of at least half an age. But this minister, whose faithful evangelical appeals to the consciences of unconverted sinners (calling upon them without any fettered restrictions to come to Christ for pardon, for sanctification, and for eternal life) were despised by men, God highly honoured. It was evident that *he so spake that the people believed, God giving testimony to the word of his grace.* And it is probable, but for

* Mr. Whitefield preached his first sermon in Moorfields, April 29, 1739, having preached in the open air on Hannam Mount, near Bristol, about two months before; and he continued his popular and useful career until Lord's Day, Sep. 30, 1770, when he fell asleep in Jesus at Newbury Port, in New England.

the rise of such a preacher as Whitefield, both as to his principles, spirit, and manner of address, just at that period, that infidelity would, in this country, have triumphed over Christianity. What with the anti-evangelical and moral discourses which prevailed among the principal Presbyterian ministers, the stiff regard to precision of discipline among the Independents, and the cold, dry, uninteresting, doctrinal statements of the leading Baptists, had not God raised up the Methodists, men of another character from each, and uniting the excellencies of all of them, the rapid decline of the churches must have gone on with an accelerated motion. The churches of regular Dissenters, after a few years, received large accessions to their numbers from the converts of Whitefield; and not a few of their subsequent ministers had been awakened to a sense of sin, and had been led to embrace the Saviour, under the ministry of that wonderful man. Another spirit—a spirit of zeal and of love united with a *sound* mind—began to be felt and manifested. The people could not rest satisfied with dry speculative discussions of controversial divinity; and a great number of ministers preached the same sentiments, though not with equal ardour, as Whitefield and his "band of men whose hearts God had touched."

It was not the kind of preaching only which I have censured, that had tended to produce this decline in our churches, but the worldly spirit that prevailed among the upper classes of Dissenters. To be zealous to obtain the rights of citizenship, and to reject with indignation the implied obloquy that they were not fit persons to be trusted with the exercise of power in the state, was worthy the character of the descendants of those by whom Hume is constrained to acknowledge "the expiring spark of civil liberty had been kept alive, and all the blessings of the constitution had been procured." But that the repeal of the Test laws should be pursued with such ardour as if it were the one thing needful, and as if the churches of

Dissenters needed the auxiliary help of the pomp and state of magistracy, was certainly overrating both the degradation which exclusion from civil offices unjustly inflicts, and the advantages which the possession of them would confer. I consider it to have been a merciful disappointment of their wishes and exertions, that the prayer of their petition was not heard. Civil distinctions are dangerous snares to Christians under any circumstances, and have proved so even at the most prosperous state of the church. What then would they have been at a time when even the things that remained appeared ready to die? The writer is no apologist for exclusive enactments, by which one party unjustly monopolizes the power and immunities of the state to the disadvantage of another. He believes that, as the Dissenters acknowledge no supreme head in ecclesiastical matters, and most cordially and loyally serve and obey the King in all civil matters, they ought to be eligible to all civil offices, in common with all other subjects; but then he also believes, that God has overruled injustice as to worldly distinctions for the spiritual good and prosperity of their churches. And he feels no difficulty in expressing his own opinion, that, but for the profanation of the Lord's Supper in the existing Test, he should consider it the duty of Dissenters to submit quietly to exclusions from power and distinction in the state, as a trifling thing which they are called to suffer for conscience sake; but while that abomination exists, they should unite in renewed applications to the legislature for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, as a measure which the honour of the Established Church, as well as the rights of Dissenters, imperiously demands.

The Baptist London Fund, established in the last reign, had now begun to produce a happy influence upon the state of the denomination, in affording pecuniary assistance to those ministers whose churches could not support them. Many young ministers, too, had received literary help, principally at Bristol,

under the care of Messrs. Fosket and Evans; and by these united means, the "coal that was left" was in many places kept from being entirely "quenched." "The Lord's portion, which is "his people," was still found in our churches; and they were "as an oak, whose substance is in it," even when it "casts its leaves." "The holy seed" continued, when the denomination was scorched with summer heats or chilled by wintry frosts. Evangelical principles were thus maintained; a holy discipline was in some good degree preserved; some pious people were constantly added to the churches; and God heard their fervent and united prayers, presented in the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "*Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them. Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?*"

It was during this reign, that an event important to protestant Dissenters took place in London, in relation to their liability to serve the office of Sheriff. The question was first started in the year 1742, when the Committee of Deputies encouraged Mr. Robert Grosvenor, who scrupled to take the sacrament according to the Church of England, as the required qualification, to refuse serving the Sheriff's office. They were of opinion that the Corporation Act, which requires the qualification, was an effectual bar to his election; and that the Toleration Act would protect him from the penalties, if he refused to qualify.

The city of London having attempted ineffectually to recover the fines from Mr. Grosvenor, and finding that even their bye-laws could not reach the Dissenters, in the year 1748 made a new law, with a view, as they alleged, of procuring fit and able persons to serve the office of Sheriff; whereby they imposed a fine of four hundred pounds and twenty marks upon every person, who, being nominated by the Lord Mayor,

should decline standing the election at the Common Hall; and six hundred pounds upon every one, who, being elected by the Common Hall, should refuse to serve the office. The fines were expressly appropriated towards defraying the expense of building the Mansion House; and above fifteen thousand pounds were thus obtained from conscientious Dissenters.

In 1754, three Dissenters (Messrs. Stratfield, Sheafe, and Evans*) were elected to this office. The Committee of Deputies, of which the last mentioned, Allen Evans, Esq. had long been an active member, encouraged them to refuse serving, as it was thought the legality of the city bye-law could not be supported.

This question was tried in September 1759, in the Sheriff's court and court of hustings, and was decided in favour of the city. But in July 1762, the Judges determined, after counsel had been heard for the defendants several days, that the former judgment must be reversed.

The Corporation, however, as their last resort, brought the question, by writ of error, before the House of Lords. Mr. Sheafe, and Mr. Stratfield, having died before this, the cause was between Sir Thomas Harrison, Knt. Chamberlain of the city of London, and Allen Evans, Esq. On the 21st and 22d of January, 1767, this cause was argued at the bar of the House of Lords, by Mr. York, and Sir Fletcher Norton, for the plaintiff, and Mr. Attorney General De Grey, and Mr. Solicitor General Willes, for the defendant. Lord Mansfield, the Chancellor, then observed to their Lordships, that he knew no difference between a person's being elected, and being duly elected; and that no person who had not taken the sacrament according to

* Allen Evans, Esq. was at this time a member and a deacon of the church in Little Wild-street, under the care of the Rev. Dr. Joseph Stennett. At the close of the year 1756 he left that church, and joined the Baptist church in Barbican, under the care of the Rev. Joseph Burroughs.

the rites of the Church of England within twelve months before, was eligible to a corporation office, whatever might be his motive. He said he was desirous, however, that their lordships might draw the line between the *bona fide* Dissenter, and the occasional conformist, the infidel, and the profligate; and that it might be so determined in their journals, as to prevent all future application to parliament, either from corporations or *bona fide* Dissenters. He would therefore propose, with their lordship's leave, the following question to be put to the judges; viz. "Whether, upon the facts admitted by the pleadings in this cause, the defendant is at liberty, or should be allowed, to object to the validity of his election, on account of his having not taken the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England within a year before, in bar of this action." On the 3d and 4th of February, all the Judges to whom it was referred, excepting one, gave it as their full and clear opinion, "That the defendant is at liberty, and should be allowed, to object to the validity of his election, on account of his not having taken the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England, within a year before, in bar of the action."

It was on this occasion that Lord Mansfield obtained for himself immortal honour, by delivering that nervous and eloquent speech, which is published as an appendix to the admirable letters of Dr. Philip Furnaux to Mr. Justice Blackstone.

"It is now," said his lordship, "no crime for a man to say he is a Dissenter; nor is it a crime for him not to take the sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England: nay, the crime is if he does it contrary to the dictates of his conscience." His lordship then exposed the principles upon which the prosecution was conducted. "This bye-law, by which the Dissenters are to be reduced to this wretched dilemma, [to render themselves obnoxious to penalties whether they serve the office, or refuse to serve it,] is a bye-law of the city,

a local corporation, contrary to an act of parliament, which is the law of the land; a modern bye-law, of very modern date, made long since the Corporation Act, long since the Toleration Act, in the face of them, for they knew these laws were in being. It was made in the same year of the reign of the late King, [George II;] I forget which, but it was made about the time of building the Mansion House! In the cause before your lordships, the defendant was by law incapable at the time of his pretended election; and it is my firm persuasion, that he was chosen because he was incapable. If he had been capable, he had not been chosen; for they did not want him to serve the office. They chose him, because, without a breach of the law, and a usurpation on the crown, he could not serve the office. They chose him, that he might fall under the penalty of their bye-law, made to serve a particular purpose; in opposition to which, and to avoid the fine thereby imposed, he has pleaded a legal disability, grounded on two acts of parliament. As I am of opinion that his plea is good, I conclude with moving your lordships, that the judgment be affirmed." This was accordingly done, and the judgment entered on the journals, February 4, 1767; and by this decision a question affecting the liberty and property of Dissenters was set for ever at rest.

At a General Meeting of the Deputies, on the 11th of March 1767, the chairman, Dr. Benjamin Avery, delivered an address in reference to what he called their recent triumph; in which he observed their obligation to the favour of providence in lengthening out the dying life of the defendant, just far enough to sustain the cause till it was judicially determined. Mr. Evans, it appears, who was now in his 82d year, was so reduced that his life was very precarious. It was considered to be an object of such importance to the Dissenters, that numerous inquiries were continually made at his house respecting the state of his health. It is scarcely possible to conceive of a scene more interesting than that brought

before us by the following statement. The intrepid old man, who had firmly stood this contest for upwards of thirteen years, and had endured all the perplexity connected with such a vexatious course of proceeding, and doubtless had felt extremely anxious to hear of its successful termination, was at length gratified by that information. "He was sufficiently sensible, when the cause was determined, to receive the information, and to express with a faint smile, and faultering accents, the satisfaction it afforded him in the immediate prospect of death." The account concluded with stating, "He was a man of considerable opulence, and great respectability, and had been several years a member of the Committee of Deputies."*

The importance of the Society of Deputies, and of the labours of their Committee, cannot be too highly estimated; and while the SHERIFF'S CAUSE is recollected as the triumph of law over cunning and malignity, the name of ALLEN EVANS, as a consistent and intrepid Dissenter, and an upright and conscientious Christian, cannot be forgotten as an example worthy of the imitation of protestant Dissenters.†

The Society for promoting religious Knowledge among the Poor was formed by persons of the Three Denominations of Dissenters, in the year 1750. It is said to have originated in the alarms which the inhabitants of London had felt from two shocks of earthquakes. These were at the beginning of this year, and only five weeks from each other; so that their consternation arose to the highest pitch, and they were filled with the most painful apprehensions. The founder of this excellent institution was Mr. Benjamin Forfitt, a caneman in Leadenhall-street, and a member of the church now under the care

* A sketch of the history and proceedings of the Dissenters, &c. p. 25—39.

† Though the period of this *decision* is beyond that to which the limits of the present volume extends, yet the author thought it desirable to give the whole case rather than divide it.

of the Rev. John Clayton, at the Weigh House. The first meeting of the society was held in the vestry of Haberdashers' Hall, August 8, 1750. The views and feelings of those who first engaged in the design may be judged of from the preface to the rules when they were first circulated. "As these considerations will, without doubt," say they, "recommend the attempt of the ministers and gentlemen who have entered into the design, to the approbation of all good men; so it is to be hoped, especially as it is wholly void of all party views, that they will engage many of every Christian denomination among us, who truly fear God, love the protestant religion and liberties, and wish well to immortal souls, to countenance, encourage, and promote it."

Of the four ministers who first patronized this excellent plan, two were of the Baptist denomination, Dr. Joseph Stennett, and Mr. Josiah Thompson. The former of these preached the annual sermon for the society in the year 1753, at Haberdashers' Hall, and published it at their request, under the title of "The Importance of Religious Knowledge." The following extract will exhibit the ardour with which these worthy men entered into the noble design of circulating Bibles, Testaments, and evangelical publications, among the poor. Dr. Stennett, in concluding his discourse, says, "The doctrine which you have heard, the value of immortal souls, the importance of sacred knowledge, and the advantageous opportunity which such days of liberty afford us of propagating it, all conspire to recommend that good design which was the occasion of our present meeting. Notwithstanding the many just complaints we have to make of the sins of the times in which we live, it must be acknowledged, that a generous readiness to encourage public charity has, of late years, prevailed among our people, especially in this great metropolis, beyond any thing our ancestors could boast of. Many useful and noble endowments have been established, and are every day more and more encouraged,

for the relief of the poor under the various calamities of human life. But as the immortal is of infinitely more importance than the outward estate, the prosperity and salvation of the souls of men than the health of the bodies, and the concerns of eternity than those of time; so every serious mind will acknowledge, that what I have to recommend deserves the most favourable regard. There are, indeed, other excellent designs of this sort, which have met with very deserved encouragement, (especially that set on foot by *the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*;) and we are very much indebted to the bounty of the late pious and noble Philip Lord Wharton, for the distribution of Scripture knowledge among our poor in this way. But still there is great room for more; and when the plan of this charity is duly considered, I believe it will appear to answer the ends of spreading Christian instruction as well, at least, as any of that kind. It was begun upon the bounty of one single hand; and when the demands exceeded the small funds by which it was supported, which was very soon the case, the help of others was called in. The beginning of this Institution was very small. The annual subscriptions and other contributions, received in the first year amounted to the sum of £114. 13*s*. 3*d*. and they expended in Bibles, Testaments, and other books, £100. 11*s*. 1*d*. The first donation of books was sent to the excellent Dr. Doddridge of Northampton, and consisted of six large, and six small Bibles, two dozen of the Assemblies catechism, (one dozen bound,) one dozen of Dr. Watts's whole set of catechisms, and two dozen second set. The letter sent by this worthy minister, acknowledging the bounty, affords proof how grateful the exhibitions of the Society were, and how much good it was expected would follow from its labours; expectations, which the well conducted plans of this admirable insti-

tution, for more than seventy years, have fully realized, and abundantly confirmed.*

The most pleasing event of a religious nature, which took place in this reign, was the rise of the Methodists. The ministry of Mr. Whitefield, and its blessed effects upon the state of our churches, has been already noticed; nor would it be right not to mention his zealous contemporary, Mr. John Wesley—a man animated by the same holy spirit of burning apostolic zeal; though, in the opinion of the writer, very far inferior to his early co-adjutor, as to the extent of his talents, and as to the correctness of his religious sentiments. It is a little singular that one of Mr. Wesley's first chapels in London had been built and occupied by Baptists. Mr. Wesley, in his journal for the year 1743, thus mentions this circumstance:—"August 6. A convenient chapel was offered me in Snow's-fields, on the other side the water. It was built on purpose, it seems, by a poor Arian misbeliever, for the defence and propagation of her bad faith. But the wisdom of God brought that device to nought, and ordered, by his over-ruling providence, that it should be employed, not for crucifying the Son of God afresh, but for calling all to believe in his name."

The Arminian sentiments of Mr. Wesley prevented any connection between him and our ministers, who were in general zealous Calvinists. Dr. Gill indeed appeared as an opposer of Mr. Wesley's tenets; for in 1752 the Doctor wrote, in answer to Mr. Wesley, a defence of predestination and final perseverance. Polemical writing was the fashion of the age, and this was generally accompanied by no inconsiderable share of bitter asperity. It cannot, however, be denied but that Mr. Wesley had used very unguarded expressions respecting some

* Sermons before the Society, by Dr. Gibbons in 1752, Dr. Stennett in 1754, Dr. Rippon in 1783.

very important doctrines of Christianity, which demanded censure, and which those who were set for the defence of the gospel were called upon to answer and expose. But if the character of this minister of Christ be judged by his abundant labours, his disinterested services, and the success with which God was pleased to render them effectual to the conversion of sinners, and to revive the languishing state of the Christian churches of that period, the influence of which is felt to the present day; it must be acknowledged that he, as well as Mr. Whitefield, was a most extraordinary man: they will be reckoned amongst the eminent reformers of the church, and their names be held in everlasting remembrance.

It is to the honour of the government of this period, that the persecutions which the Methodists were exposed to, from "lewd fellows of the baser sort," were not promoted or sanctioned by any acts of the legislature, though it should seem that many magistrates were strongly inclined to encourage such proceedings. The well known hostility of the King to persecution for the sake of conscience, doubtless restrained "those who were sent by him," from joining the ranks of the opposers of methodism, though it did not in all cases teach them to be a "terror to evil-doers," and a "praise to them that did well."

The King died October, 25, 1760, in the 77th year of his age, and the 34th of his reign; the Privy Council, in announcing his death, says, "Beloved, honoured, and regretted by his subjects, for his eminent and royal virtues."

In his conduct towards protestant Dissenters, he had sacredly observed the pledge given by him on his accession to the throne, and had "maintained the toleration inviolable." The sentiments and feeling of the Baptists on his loss, may be judged of by the following extracts from a sermon preached at Little Wild-street, November 2, 1760, by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Samuel Stennett. It is founded upon 1 Chron. xxix. 27, 28.—

Thirty-three years reigned he in Jerusalem; and he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour. "That which completes his character, and adds the highest lustre to it, is the religious regard he has ever paid to the influence of heaven in all his affairs. The protestant succession in his illustrious house, was an event in which the hand of providence signally appeared; nor did he fail to express his sense of this, when it first took effect in the peaceable accession of his royal father to the crown and dignity of these realms. During the several vicissitudes of his reign, we have seen him publicly implore the direction and blessing of Almighty God; and when victory has declared itself on his side, we have heard him, with great reverence and gratitude, ascribe praise to the same God, saying, in the language of David, whom he imitated in this as well as his other virtues, *I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me: but thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hate us.*

"Happy Prince! Thus raised up by God, to humble the pride and restrain the power of haughty tyrants; to assist his oppressed neighbours against the violent attempts of *popish* enemies; and, like a tender father, to guard the liberties, and promote the interests, of a dutiful and affectionate people. May his name ever live, not in the records of history only, but in the hearts of all those who have felt the blessings of his just, mild, and gracious administration."

BOOK II.

HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN LONDON.

THE churches in the metropolis have been incidentally mentioned in the general history of the Denomination, already given: the history of each church will now be narrated, so far as I have obtained materials for that purpose. The arrangement will be according to their respective dates; and their separate histories will be traced, either till their dissolution, or to the period of 1760.

BROAD STREET, OLD GRAVEL-LANE, WAPPING.

The origin of this church has been published in vol. i. p. 138, 139, as the first of the Particular, or Calvinistic, Baptist churches in London. The people who established it had been members of the Independent church, under Mr. John Lathorp. "In that society," it is said, "several persons, finding that the congregation kept not to its first principles of separation, and being also convinced that baptism was not to be administered to infants, but to such as professed faith in Christ, desired that they might be dismissed from that communion, and allowed to form a distinct congregation in such order as was most agreeable to their own sentiments."

"The church, considering that they were now grown very numerous, and so more than could in those times of persecution conveniently meet together, and believing also that those persons acted from a principle of conscience, and not from obstinacy, agreed to allow them the liberty they desired, and that they should be constituted a distinct church; which was performed, September 12, 1633."

This is a very interesting statement; and, as it rests upon the authority of that eminent minister, Mr. William Kiffin, it may doubtless be depended upon as correct. It is equally creditable to both parties; to those who desired a separation upon conscientious principles, and to those who granted it; herein they bore testimony to the truth and sincerity of their professions. After being regularly constituted in a separate church state, we are informed by Mr. Kiffin, that, as they believed baptism was not rightly administered to infants, so they looked upon the baptism which they had received, at that age, as invalid, whereupon most or all of them received a new baptism." From this uncertainty in stating whether some only, or all of them, were baptized upon a personal profession of their faith, it cannot now be known whether this church was composed entirely of baptized persons, though that appears to be the most rational conjecture.

The minister whom they chose as their pastor, in 1633, was Mr. John Spilsbury. But little is known of this minister, except that he was a man of reputation among his brethren. His name appears to the Confession of Faith published by seven churches in London, in 1644.* In 1652, some persecuted Baptists in Massachusett's colony, wrote a letter addressed, "Unto the well-beloved John Spilsbury, William Kiffin, and to the rest that in London stand fast in the faith, and continue to walk steadfastly in that order of gospel which was once delivered to

* Vol. i. p. 175.

the saints by Jesus Christ," &c. In the next year, 1753, I find Mr. Spilsbury's name mentioned in Thurloe's state papers, "as having dealt very homely and plainly with those of that [the fifth monarchy] judgment here," [Ireland.]*

In the same year the churches in Ireland sent a letter to the churches in London, addressed to them as "under the care of Messrs. Kiffin, Spilsbury, and others." It appears probable, from having signed the "Declaration against Venner's Rebellion, in 1662, and from his name's not appearing afterwards in any document connected with the history of the tumultuous times which followed, that he was removed by death soon after the restoration, and thus "taken away from the evil to come." He published a treatise on baptism. Of his colleague, Mr. Samuel Richardson, some account is given in vol. ii. p. 346.

It is likely that the meeting-house at Wapping was erected after the declaration of indulgence by Charles II. 1672; when many of our ministers availed themselves of the privilege of obtaining a license from the King, that they might be secured from the persecution of the prelates, and be left at liberty to preach the gospel of Christ without interruption.†

Mr. John Norcott appears to have succeeded Mr. Spilsbury as pastor of the church in Gravel-lane. He had probably been a member of the church in Petty-france, the name of "Sister Norcot" being in the list of its members in 1675. His name is among those of the London pastors, in 1674, subscribed to a public document.‡ He appears to have

* Vol. i. p. 230.

† This Meeting-house is mentioned in Maitland's List of 1639. I understand it was a good-sized place, standing back from the road, with large gates before it, leading to a court-yard. It was taken down a few years since to make way for the London Dock.

‡ The "Quakers' Appeal against Mr. Thomas Hicks." See vol. i. p. 392.

been a very judicious, popular, and useful minister of the gospel of Christ. "He was," says one who had been very intimate with him, "a most sweet and choice preacher. Most excellent skill had he to dive into gospel mysteries. He saw as far into a text of Scripture as most men now surviving, and was as careful in dividing of the word, that every one might have a portion in due season. He sounded the gospel trumpet most sweetly, and excited spiritual joy in the hearts of his hearers. In his prayers for sinners, and in his expostulations with them, his tears and entreaties were adapted to break their adamantine hearts. He was skillful in the word of righteousness; and while he always furnished precious bread for the children of God, he knew how to feed both with milk and strong meat. The place of worship was always thronged with hearers, and he was so intent upon his work that he probably shortened his days by his excessive labours; *he loved not his life unto the death.*"

The church was greatly increased by his labours, as he was an instrument through the word, and by the operation of the Spirit in his ministry, of turning many to righteousness, and thus became a father in Christ, and had many spiritual sons and daughters.

His ministry was but short; but doing with all his might whatever his hand found to do for God, he did much work in a little time. He was a most catholic spirit, loving all the ministers of Christ, and earnestly praying for them. This in some instances was not returned, as his firmness and decision in pleading for the ordinance of believer's baptism made him enemies among his Pædobaptist brethren.

This most eminent, laborious, and faithful minister of the gospel fell asleep in the Lord March 24, 1675-6. His funeral sermon was preached the 28th of that month, by the Rev. Benjamin Keach, in Gravel-lane, Wapping. The meeting-house

would not contain the numbers who pressed to hear the sermon. Many whom Mr. Keach calls "able and worthy ministers," were present on the sorrowful occasion. The text which had been chosen by the deceased, was Ps. lxxxix. 48. "*What man is he that liveth and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* Mr. Keach, who styles himself "a cordial and unfeigned lover of the deceased," appears to have delivered his sermon under much agitation of mind, and with great grief of heart. He abruptly commences by saying, "I need not tell you the ground and occasion of this present meeting. Certain I am that this is a sorrowing assembly. Whether I am fit to preach or not, I cannot tell; but sure I am that I am ripe to mourn. May I not on this occasion use the words of David upon Abner's death, 2 Sam. iii. 38. "*Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in in Israel?* Who more worthy of honour than those God confers honour upon, and who are employed as Christ's ambassadors? To treat in his stead with poor sinners about their eternal estate and condition is no small dignity; and to be deprived of such a one, what greater ground for grief and mourning?"

Mr. Keach published this sermon, entitled "A Summons to the Grave; or the Necessity of a timely Preparation for Death." It is dedicated "*To all sincere Christians that were the hearers of this sermon; but more especially to that poor, afflicted, and sorrowful congregation, which is in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, meeting in Old Gravel-lane, near Wapping, London.*" "He is gone," says Mr. Keach, "to eat the fruit of his labour; and I wish that all those choice sermons you have heard from his lips may not be buried with him: I hope the fruit of them will be seen in your lives. And could some of them be made public, they might be very serviceable unto the people of God, and others in general. I earnestly desire that the Lord may continue the labourer you have, and send some other in due time amongst you, to the making up of that great loss which at

present you sustain; so that sinners may be in the midst of you converted, and true believers strengthened, encouraged, and comforted, and all built up together in love; to the end that you may be found without blemish in the day of Jesus Christ."

With the sermon are printed two elegies and an acrostic, all in very humble lines, but breathing the warmest affection and highest reverence for the memory of Mr. Norcott. It is not said where he was buried, but the following is the epitaph which was placed on his tomb-stone.

"Here underneath this stone lieth the dust
Of NORCOTT, till the rising of the just.
His soul to heaven is fled, and there doth stand
With Christ, and all the saints at his right hand.
When upon earth he was, he did not spare
His life for Christ: it was his daily care
To pray and preach, and unto God to crave
That sinners might repent, their souls to save.
His work is done, his glass is run, and we
May all conclude he's blest to eternitie."

There is another epitaph, written by Mr. Benjamin Keach, which ought to be preserved on account of the respect and affection manifested by that excellent minister towards his departed friend and brother.

"A sweet and godly preacher doth lie here,
Who did his master Jesus love so dear,
And sinner's souls, that he his strength did spend,
And did thereby, 'tis thought, hasten his end.
He brought himself by preaching to the grave,
The precious souls of sinners for to save.
He lies here but asleep, he is not dead;
To God he lives; to Christ his soul is fled:
And e're a while must he awake again,
And evermore with Christ in glory reign."

Mr. Norcott probably died in middle life, though nothing is

said of his age. One of the elegies refers to some opposition which he met with from some Pædobaptists: this doubtless arose from the work which he published on that subject. The arguments for believers' baptism are plainly and strongly exhibited, and infant baptism is shewn to be a rite of human invention; but there was nothing in it that could justly give offence to any one. This little book is entitled, "Baptism discovered plainly and faithfully according to the Word of God; wherein is set forth the glorious Pattern of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ," &c. I have not been able to learn when this little work was first written. It is dedicated by the author, "To his beloved friends and brethren in and about Wapping, who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity, children of one Father, and partakers of the glorious Spirit of grace." It appears from this dedication, that he was distant from the church, perhaps through persecution, as he says, "Beloved brethren, it was Joseph's lot to be separated from his brethren; but God meant it for good: though it was not for the present seen, yet in due time it appeared. Joseph's dreams were fulfilled; and though the archers shot sorely at him, and grieved him, yet his bow abode in strength. It is one of the sad evils of the times, that brethren shoot at brethren; but this would be a mercy indeed, if all our aim might be more to enjoy and be conformable to Christ. One part of conformity to our Lord Jesus, is obedience to the precious ordinance of baptism. Judging you to be such as press after Christ your head, together with a testimonial of my unfeigned love to you, I have presented these few thoughts for your consideration. I have read of two loving friends, who, having spent a great part of the day in a matter of difference between them, could not be reconciled, and so parted. One of them bethinking himself of that text, Eph. iv. 26, ran to the other, saying, *The sun is going down*, by which they were immediately reconciled. My brethren, our sun is going down; eternity is upon us; and shall we not consider

the work we have to do for the Lord?" &c. This excellent little piece is divided into eleven chapters; "1. Christ was baptized in the river of Jordan. 2. Of the great commission for believers' baptism. 3. Examples. 4. Baptism is dipping, or covering, under water. 5. Proving water baptism to continue till the second coming of Jesus Christ. 6. That no measures of grace, or of the Spirit, are a sufficient ground to keep any from water-baptism. 7. Believers' baptism a great ordinance. 8. Answers to the common objections. 9. Believers' baptism and infant baptism compared. 10. Plain scriptures concerning baptism, without any human consequences from man's wisdom. 11. Considerations by way of conclusion." The Appendix is said to be "by another hand," and contains "Objections of the Pædobaptists, with answers thereunto."

The copy before me is the *fifth edition*, corrected: printed 1721. There is a recommendatory preface to it, which is signed William Kiffin, and R. C.* There is no date to this epistle; but it appears to have been prefixed to the second edition. The writers of the preface say, "The author of this short and plain discourse was a true lover of our Lord Jesus and his holy appointments. He steered his whole course by the compass of the word, making Scripture precept or example his constant rule in matters of religion. Other men's opinions or interpretations were not the standard by which he went; but, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, he laboured to find out what the Lord himself had said in his word. And therefore, throughout this little book, he still keeps close to the Scriptures, vouching no authority for what he delivers, but from thence.

* This was Mr. Richard Claridge, who had been rector of Poppleton, and who was baptized at Bromsgrove, 1691. He settled in London as pastor of the church in Bagnio-court; but after a few years turned Quaker.

"What approbation this piece hath found, may appear from hence; that since the first edition of it here in England, it hath also been re-printed in Holland, was also lately translated into Welsh, and now growing scarce and much asked for, the bookseller hath been advised to give it another impression."

Mr. Keach has not mentioned who the minister was that was with the people at the time of Mr. Norcott's death; it should seem, however, that he did not expect him to be called to the pastoral office. Mr. Hercules Collins succeeded Mr. Norcott, and was settled as pastor of this church in 1677. He and his wife appear to have been members of the church in Petty-france in 1676, under the care of Mr. William Collins, though there is no evidence of his having been any relation of that worthy and learned minister. In the records of that church is the following memorandum:—"Feb. 29, 1679-80. The congregation agreed to enter into an association with the congregation meeting in Gravel-lane, that our brother Collins is pastor of." From his name being frequently mentioned afterwards, there was evidently a close connection between the two churches.

Mr. Collins was not long in this situation before he was called to "suffer as a Christian." On the persecution breaking out in 1684, he was committed to Newgate, where he lay till the popish politics of James II. led him "to proclaim liberty to protestant Dissenting captives," and "to open the prison doors to those that were bound." For more than two years the meeting-house in Gravel-lane, and all others, were shut up, and the congregations scattered.

While Mr. Collins was in prison, he was called to witness the deaths of several of his brethren. The names of Delaune, and Bampfield, and Ralphson, who fell victims to the popish policy of Charles II. and the party zeal of persecuting prelates, should be engraven upon the hearts of English Baptists. These were men who were valiant for the truth upon earth, at a time

when they who departed from evil made themselves a prey. So true it is, that the wicked walk on every side, when the vilest of men are exalted.

To improve the deaths of these worthy confessors, Mr. Collins published a funeral sermon, entitled, "Counsel for the Living, occasioned by the Dead; or, a Discourse on Job. iii. 17, 18. arising from the Deaths of Mr. Francis Bampfield, and Mr. Zachariah Ralphson: by Hercules Collins, their Fellow-prisoner in Newgate." There are several scriptures at length in the title page;—Ps. cxlvi. 7—11. vi. 15; and 2 Tim. i. 10, 11. "London, printed by George Larkin, for the Author, 1684."

This sermon was accompanied with an elegy composed by a friend of Mr. Ralphson, and designed for him alone; but it was altered by Mr. Collins to be suitable to both: "1. As they were ministers of Christ. 2. As they were sufferers for Christ. 3. As to their zeal against Antichrist. 4. In respect of their longing for Sion's welfare, and their mourning under Sion's calamities. 5. In respect of soul feedings, and soul supportings, by all the ways and means they were capable of in their confined estate."

A few lines from this elegy will give the reader an idea of the spirit in which it was written.

"May not all fear when heaven denounceth woes
Aloud by signal and by fatal blows,
Smiting the shepherd, calling guides away,
That flocks are left to wonder, starve, and stray;
Even when the wolves, the foxes, and the boar,
Rage for the prey, and harmless lambs devour?

* * * * * * *

By tongue I cannot, nor by pen express
My thoughts of them and their great worthiness;
Of their refined zeal, their hearts contrite,
Of their confessions, with a public sprite.
Their liberal souls were highly to be prized,
Also their stedfastness is magnified.

O zealous ones, who in the gap did stand,
True wrestling watchmen to preserve the land!
Striving withal the gospel to promote.

* * * * * * *

These seers are both removed from their station,
A signal loss both to the church and nation."*

On Mr. Collins's deliverance from prison in 1686, he returned to his work with renewed ardour. "He was not shocked," (greatly terrified,) says Mr. Piggott, "by his persecutors, though he suffered imprisonment for the name of Christ."

He appears to have been a zealous promoter of the plans adopted and recommended by the general assembly in 1689. He represented the church at Wapping, with Messrs. Humphrey Hutchings and John Overinge. In 1692 he attended the Assembly without the company of the deacons, who had perhaps been displeased with some part of the proceedings.

In 1692 Mr. Collins published a small well-written work, entitled, "Believers' Baptism from Heaven, and of Divine Institution; Infants' Baptism from Earth, and of Human Invention." In 1699 he assisted in the ordination of Mr. Thomas Harrison, at Lorimers' Hall.

But his race was very short: he finished his course while young, though his age is not particularly mentioned. He died Oct. 4, 1702, and was interred Oct. 9, in Bunhill-fields,† where,

* For fuller accounts of these pious Confessors and Martyrs, see vol. i. p. 397—407, (where Mr. Bampfield is by mistake called Mr. *Edward* Bampfield,) and vol. ii. p. 476—480.

† "This is situated," says Maitland, "north of the Artillery-ground, and south of Old Street-road, (by the Saxons denominated Eald-street, because it was part of the Roman military highway, which anciently led from the western to the eastern parts of the kingdom.) The space between Old-street and the Artillery-ground was called Bonhill, or Bunhill-fields. Part thereof, at present denominated Tindal's, or the Dissenters' great burying ground, was by the Mayor and Citizens of London, in the year 1665, set

according to Strype,* a stone was erected to the memory of him and Sarah his wife, who died soon after him, April 6, 1703. Mr. Piggot preached his funeral sermon at Wapping, while the corpse of his late brother was before him. This was afterwards printed, and dedicated "to the church of Christ lately under the care of the deceased Mr. Hercules Collins." In this he says, "Now if it be a favourable providence when God blesses a people with an able minister, then certainly the removal of such a one by death must be a sad sign of the divine displeasure; especially when, according to the course of nature, he might have been useful many years to come. This, my brethren, you might have hoped for from your late pastor, who was suddenly snatched from you. Your loss is great, but heaven can relieve you under it. The stream, indeed, that formerly refreshed you is dried up, but the fountain is inexhaustible: the borrowed light that you enjoyed is eclipsed, but the Sun of Righteousness will ever shine with an unfading lustre; for he is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and let such thoughts as these be some revival under this terrible stroke."

Mr. Piggott's text was Matt. xxiv. 44. *Therefore be ye also ready,* &c. It appears from the sermon, that Mr. Collins was ill only a few days. He had preached on the previous Lord's

apart and consecrated, as a common cemetery, for the interment of such corpses as could not have room in their parochial burying grounds, in that dreadful year of pestilence. However, it not being made use of on that occasion, the said Tindal took a lease thereof, and converted it into a burial ground for the use of Dissenters; over the west gate of which was the following inscription. "This church yard was enclosed with a brick wall, at the sole charges of the city of London, in the mayoralty of Sir John Laurence, Knt. Anno Dom. 1665, and afterwards the gates thereof were built, and finished in the mayoralty of Sir Thomas Bloudworth, Knt. Anno Dom. 1666. *Maitland*, p. 775.

* Strype, vol. ii. p. 55.

day a funeral sermon from those words, *They overcame by the blood of the Lamb.* He retained an excellent savour of divine things to the day of his death, and discoursed on the same morning in an affecting manner upon his last text. "'Tis true," exclaims this eloquent affectionate man, "he is fallen in battle, but he died more than a conqueror; and having finished his course, and kept the faith, he quitted the body, that he might receive an unfading crown of glory."

Addressing particularly the members of the church, Mr. Piggott says, "You have lost an excellent pastor. In the midst of your tears look up to heaven, and pray to the *Lord of the harvest that he would send forth more labourers into the harvest.* Remember, the God you pray to can dispense the Spirit in what manner he pleases, and qualify whom he will for the ministration of the gospel. But let not that make you defective on your part; for you must not expect that preachers will drop down from heaven, or spring out of the earth; but due care must be taken for the encouragement of humble men, who have real gifts, that such be trained up in useful learning, that they may be able to defend the truths they preach. Your pastor's mouth is stopped, and cannot speak to you; but this I am sure was the sense of his mind." It appears from Mr. Collins's publications, that he was a man of respectable learning. Mr. Piggott estimates, that he was not so accurate a preacher as some others; but he adds, "This defect was supplied by a constant flame; for no man could preach with a more affectionate regard to the salvation of souls. He had Luther's three qualifications for a gospel minister, 'meditation, prayer, and temptation.' And how well he discharged the other branches of his pastoral function this church is a witness, which he has watched over and visited above five and twenty years."

Thus the church at Wapping was again left destitute of a pastor. In urging them to maintain a suitable deportment, Mr. Piggott said, at the close of his sermon, "Labour to *keep the*

unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. And though your elder is dead, remember your relation to the church is not dissolved, but you are bound to keep your places, and do your utmost to promote the happiness of this congregation. The church is in a state of widowhood; be as speedy as you can in filling up the place in the church of him that is gone: and may you have a *pastor after God's own heart!*"

Mr. Mark Key, a member and minister of Devonshire-square church, was invited to succeed Mr. Collins; but at the earnest solicitation of that church, April 1, 1703, he respectfully declined accepting the situation of pastor in Gravel-lane, Wapping. It was probably from the circumstance of Mr. Key's preferring to be an assistant minister at Devonshire-square, that five or six of the members of the church in Gravel-lane applied in June, 1704, to join in communion with that church, and that the church at Gravel-lane refused to grant them a dismission for that purpose, though they had nothing to allege against them injurious to their reputation.

The next minister respecting whom I have any information, at this place, was a Mr. Edward Elliott, who, in 1715, was the pastor here; how much earlier I have not ascertained. His name is mentioned as pastor of one of the churches, whose poor were relieved by the bounty of Mr. Thomas Hollis, in 1715. It is probable that Mr. Elliott was removed by death soon after; as in the year 1717, in the records of the Baptist Fund, where the congregation is spoken of, it is said to have been under the care of "the late Mr. Elliott."

About the year 1719, or 1720, Mr. Clendon Dawkes accepted the pastoral office, but resigned it at Christmas, 1725. The church became united with the Baptist fund during his ministry, by paying £50, October 2, 1722. Their collection the next year was ten guineas. It is evident his ministry had been very unpopular, as I find in November, 1724, two messengers from the church at Wapping, applying for advice to the

Society of Ministers, concerning their present circumstances in relation to Mr. Dawkes. "They were advised to send messengers to him into the country, clothed with the authority of the church, to lay before him, and advise with him concerning, the declining state of the church, and in the most tender manner to acquaint him that if he should remain incapable of serving them, they must seek for other assistance."

Immediately on Mr. Dawkes's leaving them, they invited Mr. Samuel Wilson, who had lately entered with much popularity upon the work of the ministry, and was an assistant to Mr. John Noble, at Tallow-chandlers' Hall. He settled as pastor of this church about the year 1726, in which year his name was returned to the Baptist Fund. The next year I find him mentioned in this relation as a minister of the General Body of Dissenting Ministers. When he first took the charge of the church, it was in a low declining state; but, upon its reviving with his ministry, he and some of his friends resolved to erect a new building in what was then called Rosemary Branch, now Little Prescot-street. This was in the year 1730. Some of the members who disapproved this proceeding, sent a letter to the Society of Ministers, at Blackwell's Coffee-house, addressed to Mr. (afterwards Dr.) John Gill, desiring the ministers to dissuade Mr. Wilson from his purpose; no attention seems to have been paid to this curious application.

Those who remained at the old place in Broad-street, after Mr. Wilson and the majority of the church had left them, resolved to procure another pastor, and fixed upon Mr. John Rhudd, who was ordained over it in the year 1731 or 1732, as I find him reported to the General Body, August 29, 1732, as having been "chosen pastor to a congregation in Broad-street, Wapping." This connection, however, was but of short continuance; as Mr. Rhudd soon declared himself to have embraced the sentiments which his brother, Dr. Sayer Rhudd,

had avowed, and the church, to their honour, immediately proceeded to exclude him from the pastoral office.

From a pamphlet published by Mr. John Rhudd, in the next year, the following account is extracted.

"Minutes of the Church meeting in Broad-street, Wapping, at their church-meeting, held on Lord's day, the 3d of March, 1733. "The church being informed that brother John Rhudd, our pastor, has declared himself of principles destructive of the personality of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that is, that he believes there is but one person in the godhead; and he having declared himself of that opinion to the church; it is agreed,

"1. To abide by the articles of our faith, recorded in the church book; viz. 'We believe that there are three persons in the godhead, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit: and that these three are one God.

"2. That brother Rhudd's declaration of one person in the godhead, is destructive of the above article of our faith, and consequently, of what we believe to be a fundamental article of the Christian religion.

"3. That our bother Rhudd, having denied the personality of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, or the doctrine of the Trinity, is guilty of heresy.

"4. That brother Rhudd be desired not to officiate as pastor among us, till he has given us satisfaction of his forsaking his heresy, and having embraced the doctrine of the Trinity, or personality of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

"5. Agreed to admonish brother Rhudd to forsake his heresy and return to the truth; and to appoint brother Allchurch, brother Scott, and brother Gander, to give the said admonition.

"6. Agreed to lay the above resolutions before the Board of Ministers of the Particular Baptist persuasion, and to desire

them to preach among us on Lord's days; and we appoint bother E. Elliott, and brother T. Gander, to wait on the Board with these our resolutions.

JOHN SCOTT, Secretary."

Lord's day, May 26, 1733.

Mr. Rhudd entitled his pamphlet, "A Letter to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation meeting in Broad-street, Wapping, London; occasioned by their late proceedings against the author, on his profession of Unitarianism. By John Rhudd, Minister of the Gospel. With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment: he that judgeth me is the Lord. St. Paul's 1 Epist. Cor. London, sold by J. Noon, at the White Hart, Cheapside. cIↃ IↃ cc xxxiiii. Price 6*d*."

From this it appears that Mr. Rhudd, finding the church resolved to dismiss him from his office if he did not renounce his errors, immediately gave them his written resignation, telling them they were free to proceed to another election. It does not appear that a single member of the church adhered to him, notwithstanding all the sophistry by which he endeavoured to support the Unitarian hypothesis.

Mr. Rhudd has made a retort, which, if founded in truth, must have been very biting to the members of the church. He says, "And now you are in this fit of discipline, it might become you perhaps, brethren, allow me to suggest by the by, (nor call it a name it does not deserve,) to consider, whether there are not others of your community as obnoxious on moral accounts, as I am so unhappy to be rendered in my doctrinal heretical principles." p. 48.

But Mr. Rhudd was very angry when he published his pamphlet, and therefore implicit reliance must not be placed on his charges. Nothing, however, was half so provoking to him as the silence of the "Machiavels at the head of the Particular Baptist interest." He says, "Since they will not publish it, we will let all the world know what we are made he-

retics for; we dare you to the combat; let the cause be tried. If you have so much leisure and abilities, we desire they may be laid out upon us; we hope to approve ourselves a match for them all. We are neither afraid nor ashamed of our principles. One God is our Mediator; or, as the Scripture expresses it, God in Christ; or, God manifest in the flesh, for the salvation of the elect, the kindred of that flesh. This we assert is the great mystery of godliness, in opposition to all the metaphysical jargon, and impertinent nonsense, of that illiterate enthusiast old Athanasius. None of your Tritheism for us; we detest and renounce it all; and are ready to enter the controversy as soon as you please. As you have made us heretics, you shall reclaim us again; or depend upon it, we will make you something before we have done with you."

The church in Broad-street does not appear to have had another pastor after this. Crosby, who thought the Messrs. Rhudd's hardly dealt with by the Society of Ministers, gives no account of Mr. John Rhudd, or of his connection with this church; he only says, when mentioning the removal of the majority to Prescot-street, "The remaining part continued some years together; but labouring under many difficulties, they were in the end necessitated to dissolve their church state." Crosby wrote this in 1740.

The meeting-house in Broad-street is mentioned by Maitland, in 1739, as one of those which belonged to the Independents. It is probable, therefore, that the Baptist congregation was reduced so low, that it could not renew the lease, or maintain some other expenses, and was thus obliged to leave the first meeting-house erected for the Particular Baptists in London, for the use of another Denomination.

This ancient church, which had enjoyed the rich labours of a Spilsbury, a Norcott, and a Collins, and which had prospered under such culture, appears to have been gradually declining under the preaching of their successors (especially of Mr. Clen-

don Dawkes, who had contributed, it seems, to reduce several churches,) until it experienced a temporary revival under Mr. Wilson. Still however they maintained an honest zeal for the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity, and the proper divinity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit. One cannot but lament that they were obliged to forsake the house erected by the piety of their godly and orthodox progenitors.

It is a gratifying circumstance that the church, (by which is meant a majority of the members which constituted the body previous to the separation,) after it had removed to Prescot-street, with Mr. Samuel Wilson, experienced a happy revival; and was greatly increased under the ministry of that learned and popular minister, who will be again introduced to the reader under that article.

CHURCH IN DEVONSHIRE SQUARE.

THE Meeting-house, which is a substantial brick building, is situated in a paved yard behind Devonshire-square, Bishopgate-street. It was built at the beginning of the reign of James II. and was opened for public worship on Tuesday, March 1, 1686. Mr. Kiffin, the venerable pastor, and others, preached on that occasion; and, what was not very usual at that time among the Baptists, "psalms were sung there."

This meeting-house is of an oblong form, and has three galleries: it will contain about six hundred persons. It was originally fitted up without seats, and had only forms, which was still the case in the recollection of an old member of that church, who gave this information to the writer. The only marks of distinction in the meeting-house are two raised seats, expensively fitted up on each side of the pulpit. These were altered for the accommodation, and at the

expence, of the Lady Dowager Page, when the Joiners'-hall church removed from Pinners'-hall to Devonshire-square, in June 1724. About fifty years since the meeting-house was new fronted, and improved in other respects.

This church was formed under Mr. William Kiffin in 1638, and it should seem had assembled near their present place, in Fisher's Folly. But after the fire of London, which began September 2, 1666, their place of worship was wrested from them, and converted into a tabernacle for an episcopal congregation, till the parish churches were rebuilt, when the Baptists were graciously permitted, by the head of the [established] church, again to occupy their own meeting-house. There is no reason to doubt that the first place mentioned in the following document from Maitland's History of London, (which is contained also in Skepp's and Pennant's,) refers to Mr. Kiffin's meeting-house, which is described as "a convenient place, with two galleries, pews, and seats."* The church book before the Restoration

* At this time the Conventicle Act was passed. "After having driven the Dissenters from their meeting-houses in London by an armed force," says Maitland, "to the great terror of some, and the death of others, they now changed hands, and instead of appropriating the meeting-houses to *profane uses*, they were converted into so many tabernacles, for the use of the citizens till their churches should be re-built, during which time they were to be regularly supplied by Church of England divines; wherefore, on the 15th of June, 1666, public notice was given by royal proclamation, 'That the places undermentioned, of late made use of for conventicles and unlawful assemblies, are now, *by his Majesty's particular command in Council*, appointed to be used every Lord's day for the celebration of divine worship, and preaching the word of God, by approved orthodox ministers, appointed by the Bishop of London, to commence on the Sunday following, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the adjacent parishes respectively, where parish churches were consumed by the late dreadful fire; viz.

in 1660 is lost, and that marked B. commences March 15, 1664. From these records it should appear, that some of the people had deserted their brethren with the change of the times. One of these is said to have "neglected his duty a long time, and forsaken the assemblies of his people, and also frequented parish churches, contrary to the true end of his former profession, and taken upon him the charge of a churchwarden." Refusing to appear before the church, at the request of the messengers, "brother Kiffin and brother Cooper, he was separated from their communion in a solemn manner, according to rule." Another person, the same day, (March 15,

1. In *Fisher's Folly*,* in Bishopgate-street, a convenient place, with two galleries, pews, and seats.

2. In *Hand-alley*, in Bishopgate-street, a large room purposely built for a meeting-house, with three galleries, thirty large pews, and many benches and forms, known by the name of *Vincent's* congregation.

3. In *St. Michael's-lane*, a large room, with two galleries, and thirty-nine forms.

4. In *Mugwell-street*, (Monkwell-street,) Mr. Doolittle's meeting-house, built of brick, with three galleries, full of large pews below, with locks and keys to them, besides benches and forms.

5. The *Cockpit*, in Jewin-street, a meeting-house of one Grimes, three galleries, many pews, forms, and benches.

6. In *Blackfriars*, Mr. Wood's meeting house; four rooms opening into one another, with lattice partitions, each room conveniently filled with benches and forms.

7. In *Salisbury-court*, four rooms opening into one another, in the possession of John Farol, a schoolmaster.

8. In *New-street*, Shoe-lane, four rooms opening into one another, with seventeen pews, and divers benches, in the possession of Mrs. Fowler."—*History of London*, p. 298.

* So called from Jasper Fisher, citizen and goldsmith, one of the six clerks in chancery, and a justice of the peace, who erected a large and magnificent mansion here, and embarrassed his circumstances by his extravagant acts of ostentation. On the site of this mansion Devonshire-square was afterwards erected.

1664,) and for similar conduct, it was "unanimously concluded and judged, should be cut off from them as an unfruitful branch," &c.

Mr. Thomas Patient, of whom an account is given, vol. ii. p. 326—328, was ordained as co-pastor with Mr. William Kiffin, June 28, 1666, and died the next month, July 30, 1666.* Daniel Dyke, M. A. succeeded to that office, February 17, 1668, and died in 1688. See an account of him, vol. ii. p. 328—331. It was during his time that the meeting-house was erected. Mr. Dyke was appointed with Mr. Benjamin Dennis, in 1679, "to represent the associated churches in London," at an Association which was to be held at [Hemel] Hempstead, October 6, 1679.

There is a blank in the records of the church in Devonshire-square from 1676 till October 1690.

It has been stated that the separation of this church from that in Gravel-lane, Wapping, arose from a controversy which took place among its members, "on the propriety of admitting persons to preach who had not been baptized by immersion; and that this produced a friendly separation, headed by Mr. Kiffin, who seems to have been averse to mixed communion: but the two societies kept up a friendly correspondence."

This statement is certainly incorrect. No evidence can be produced that the church in Old Gravel-lane ever practised mixed communion. That Mr. Kiffin was an advocate for strict communion, is certainly true; but a belief that "baptism by

* This was the year of that plague, which, in the course of about eight months, carried off, it was computed, 68,596 persons, in London only. London had often been visited with this dreadful calamity before.—Camden, speaking of the Charter-house, says, "And in that place heretofore was a most famous burying cemetery, or burial-place, in which, in a plague time at London, were buried, in the year 1349, more than fifty thousand persons; a thing recorded to posterity by an inscription, which continued there a long time engraven in brass."—*Britannia*, p. 433.

immersion, on a profession of faith, was appointed by our Lord, and practised by the apostles *as a term of communion,* was never considered as involving the question, whether an unbaptized person should be permitted to preach in our congregations. The writer is willing to challenge investigation on this subject, and to assert and maintain, till the contrary is proved from good authority, that no one instance can be produced from the whole history of the denomination, of such folly and illiberality. The probability is, that the separation was an amicable arrangement for the accommodation of the members of the church who resided in the city.

The only work published by Mr. Kiffin, was a treatise with the following title page:—"A sober Discourse of right to Church Communion, wherein is proved by Scripture, the example of Primitive Times, and the practice of all that have professed the Christian Religion, that no unbaptized Person may be regularly admitted to the Lord's Supper: by W. Kiffin, a lover of Truth and Peace. *Then they that gladly received the word, were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls,* Acts ii. 41. *Ye shall observe to do, therefore, as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left,* Deut. v. 22. *Joying, and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ,* Col. ii. 5. London, 1681."

This publication was intended as a reply to Mr. Bunyan's little piece on Mixed Communion printed in 1672, and to his "Peaceable Principles and True," written on the same subject, though Mr. Kiffin does not even mention Mr. Bunyan's name. The subject is very candidly and luminously discussed: I shall quote the concluding paragraph, to show the spirit in which it was composed. It is an answer to a supposed objection:—"And whereas it may be objected, that 'tis love and not baptism that discovers us to be Christ's disciples; it is answered, We do readily confess that we are commanded to put on love,

Col. iii. 14, which is a great character of a disciple of Christ; and it is much to be lamented, that there is so little seen among saints. Yet that cannot be called love, which is exercised in opposition to the order prescribed in the word, by which ordinances are to be administered; for as love is a grace of the Spirit of Christ, so ordinances are the appointments of the same Spirit which works grace in the hearts of Christians, all true gospel love being regulated by gospel rule. And as all men may know the disciples of Christ by their love one to another, so also, it is a character given by the same Lord, of being a disciple, when this love is manifest in keeping his commandments." Mr. Kiffin quotes at length the following Scriptures, John xiv. 15, 21, 23, 24; and then adds, "Now of these commandments this ordinance of baptism is not the least; and it seems to savour of little love in them that would have men believe it is advanced in them above their brethren, to charge them with a want of love, as the only reason why they cannot admit persons to the Supper of the Lord that never yet received the baptism of Christ. Therefore, here we can appeal to the searcher of hearts, that the true reason is, because we dare not break that rule and order by which we find the primitive saints walked, and not want of love to them; and the sense we have of the great severity God hath shewed against those that have made the least breach upon that order which he himself hath prescribed.

"These things I leave to the serious consideration of those to whom this Essay may come, desiring they may try all things, and hold fast that which is good."

As the address prefixed to this Essay, (p. 129—131,) states a few historical facts respecting this venerable man, who had now attained his 68th year, a short extract will be made from it. "To the Christian reader. When it pleased God, of his free grace, to cause me to make a serious inquiry after Jesus Christ, and to give me some taste of his pardoning love, the

sense of which did engage my heart with desires to be obedient to his will in all things, I used all endeavours by converse with such as were able, and also by diligently searching the Scriptures, with earnest desires of God that I might be directed in a right way of worship; and after some time concluded, that the safest way was to follow the footsteps of the flock, namely, that order laid down by Christ and his apostles, and practised by the primitive Christians in their times; which I found to be, that after conversion they were baptized, added to the church, and continued in the apostle's doctrine, and fellowship, and breaking of bread, and in prayer; according to which I thought myself bound to be conformable. And having continued in the profession of the same for these forty years, although through many weaknesses and fears, temptations and sufferings, yet not without some witness from God of his gracious acceptance and strength to this very day; the sense I have of my own weakness and inability would have been a bar to me to appear in this public way, did I not see a necessity lying upon me for the truth's sake, and the sakes of many, by reason of some that have lately risen up to weaken, if not to make void, that great ordinance of baptism, by endeavouring to maintain that all persons that believe, although they never did, nor do practise the same, may partake of the Lord's Supper," &c.

This good man, after the publication of his Essay, was called into the field of Christian warfare, and at the last period of his life endured some of his sharpest agonies. Those who have read the former volumes will know, that this remark refers to the tragical end of Messrs. William and Benjamin Hewling, his grandsons, who were officers in the Duke of Monmouth's army, and who were executed, by order of the ferocious and implacable Jefferies, at Lyme, in Dorsetshire. It was after this publication, too, that he was made Alderman of the City, by a commission from King James II. in 1688. He was also appointed "a justice of the peace, and one of the lieutenancy."

To avoid ruin by excessive fines, he accepted, though with great reluctance, the office of Alderman; but he ran the risk of being fined £500 for neglecting to take the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the Church of England. The part Mr. Kiffin took in the General Assemblies, &c. notwithstanding his age, has been fully given in our former volumes.

Mr. Kiffin, from a letter preserved in Thurloe's State Papers, has been stated to have offered himself as a candidate to represent the county of Middlesex in the year 1656. That letter, however, contains no ground for such a conclusion. He is called, in a reproachful pamphlet, published in 1659, a Lieutenant-Colonel of the London Militia, and is spoken of as being at the camp at Finsbury. It is intimated, too, that he had been in Parliament. The writer says, "If you compare his speeches in that mock Parliament, with his exercises and lectures at his Bedlam, you would wonder one and the same man could be so silent and clamorous; but he was Will the whisperer to the one, and the bawler to the other."*

Mr. Kiffin, having acquired as a merchant a very large property, was the object of envy; and his enemies were always plotting to bring him into some difficulty with the government. Doubtless that was the design of the letter mentioned above, which Mr. Kiffin prudently sent to the Secretary of State, Thurloe, that he might not be implicated in the charge of having encouraged seditious speeches against the Protector and the government. It arose probably from the following circumstance, mentioned in a manuscript account of Mr. Kiffin's life, written by himself:—"When the first war between England and Holland broke forth, the Hollanders had, by compliance with the

* See a pamphlet entitled "The life and approaching death of William Kiffin, extracted out of the Visitation Book, by a church member: 1659, five quarto pages;" the reader, by considering the *date*, will see that the writer was bowing towards the rising sun!

Swedes and Danes, bought up all the pitch, tar, hemp, and cordage, to prevent the Parliament from being able to supply their fleet. Upon which the Council of State made an order that all merchants, that would bring in any of the said goods, should have orders to bring in any other sorts of prohibited goods, proportionable to the above said goods they brought in; which every man that went for the said order had: and by means thereof the Parliament was furnished with all things belonging to shipping during that war. That order I, with many others, took, and enjoyed the benefit of, upon the terms the said order expressed; which orders were given, not as an act of favour, but of State. Other orders, besides these two, I never had any from the Parliament; and from the Protector I obtained not any: neither did I desire any; but whatever I had was in common with all men. I the rather give some account of this, to satisfy all hereafter, that what estate God hath blessed me withal, hath been by his hand in my lawful employment."

In 1693, when Mr. Kiffin wrote the above statement, he was seventy-seven years of age. In addition to extracts from this valuable manuscript, in this and the former volumes, I now quote the conclusion, to show that neither mercantile pursuits, nor worldly honours and riches, had proved injurious to this worthy Christian pastor. "I have given this brief account of these things, that you may see how good the Lord hath been, to prevent the designs then in hand to destroy both religion and liberty. And I heartily desire that both myself and all others concerned, may acknowledge the great goodness of God therein, that he may have the glory of all our delivering mercies; and [that] you, my children, grand-children, and great grand-children, may remember them with grateful hearts, and thus further the praise of God. Towards me be [it] remembered, that during the time of my being in the office of Alderman, (my lot being to be Alderman of the Ward of Cheap,) although I was a stran-

ger to most of the Ward, yet I found so much respect from them, as could not be expected by me. * * * * * Having been in that office about nine months, I was discharged of it to my very great satisfaction. I have left these several providences and mercies behind me, that you may consider them.

"Having tasted of the goodness of God, and his favour towards me from my youth,—(it being now sixty years since it pleased the Lord to give me a taste of his rich grace and mercy in Jesus Christ to my soul; although my unprofitableness under these mercies and providences that have attended me hath been very great, and they are not to be looked upon as products of chance, as many do some experiences and deliverances they receive from God in the course of their lives, but are fruits of the care and goodness God is pleased to show to his poor people in the world; there is not any design hatched against them for their ruin, but they are rescued from them by the special care and providence of God; and I may say by experience, *If the Lord had not been my help, many a time I had been swallowed up quick,*)—I leave these few experiences with you, desiring the Lord to bless them, and bless them to you; and, above all, I pray for you, that you may in a special manner look after the great concerns of your souls; to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom to know is eternal life; endeavouring to be diligent, to inquire after, and to be established in, the great doctrines of the gospel, which are of absolute necessity to salvation.

"I every day must expect to leave this world; having lived in it much longer than I expected, being now in the 77th year of my age, and yet know not what my eyes may see before my change. The world is full of confusion; the last times are upon us; the signs of them are very visible; *Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold.* God is by his Providence shaking the earth under our feet. There is no sure foundation

of rest and peace but only in Jesus Christ; to whose grace I commit you."

Mr. Kiffin seems to have considered himself as standing on the brink of Jordan when he wrote this edifying statement for the use of his descendants. He, however, continued seven years longer in the wilderness; and, *after having served his generation by the will of God, he came to his grave in a full age, full of days, riches, and honour.* He died Dec. 29, 1701, and was buried in Bunhill-fields, where a stone was erected to his memory. The inscription is in vol. ii. p. 326. There is a fine original painting of this worthy man in the possession of the Rev. Richard Frost, of Dunmore, Essex, one of Mr. Kiffin's descendants; and a fine engraving from it was given in the first volume of Mr. Wilson's History of Dissenters.

Mr. Kiffin lived with his wife in the greatest domestic comfort for the space of forty-four years. Concerning her he says, "Whose tenderness to me, and faithfulness to God, were such as cannot by me be expressed, being one that sympathized with me in all my afflictions. I can truly say, I never knew her utter the least discontent under all the various providences that attended me or her; but eyeing the hand of God in them, so as to be a constant encourager of me in the ways of God. Her death was to me the greatest sorrow I ever met withal in the world. She departed this life the 5th of October, 1682."

Mr. Kiffin had three daughters, and several sons. One of his daughters married Mr. Benjamin Hewling, a Turkey merchant of considerable property in London. Another, Mr. Hayes the banker, who was tried for his life on the charge of having transmitted money to Sir Thomas Armstrong, who had been outlawed for that which brought Russell and Sydney, those illustrious patriots, to the scaffold. This gentleman "defended himself," says Burnet, "with great spirit and success, to the confusion of the court." Another married Mr. Thomas Liddel. One son died when about twenty, and another was poisoned by a

popish priest at Leghorn. His grand daughter, Hannah Hewling, (sister to the unfortunate youths before mentioned,) about a year after the execution of her brothers, married Major Henry Cromwell, grandson of the celebrated Oliver Cromwell. From this marriage the late Oliver Cromwell, of Cheshunt, who published the memoirs of his great progenitor, descended, and was the last surviving branch of that once distinguished family.

Mr. Richard Adams had been ordained co-pastor with Mr. Kiffin in October, 1690. It was towards the latter end of the reign of Charles II. that Mr. Adams came out of Leicestershire to London. He was first settled as pastor of a church at Shad-Thames, Bermondsey, and, at the death of Mr. Daniel Dyke, succeeded him as pastor of the church in Devonshire-square. He was an old man at that time, but he continued pastor of the church about twenty years, though he was unable to preach for several years before his death.

Mr. Adams attended the meeting of the General Assembly at Lorimers'-hall, in 1705, but took offence at some part of the business, and gave a different statement of the transactions of the Assembly to what was given by Mr. Key and Mr. Toms, on which account the church withdrew the next year. The last time Mr. Adams attended the church-meeting was April 24, 1718: it is probable he died soon after.

Mr. Mark Key, who first became assistant to Mr. Adams, and then succeeded him in the office, appears to have been a highly esteemed and useful minister. His parents were members of the church in White's-alley, Moorfields. Mr. Mark Key joined that communion, and was by them called to the ministry April 1691. He became an assistant minister in the church in the same year, but resigned the office on account of ill-health, in April 1695, and retired into the country for the benefit of the air. In June, 1692, we find that he was engaged by the church in St. John's Court, Hart-street, Covent Garden,

in connection with Mr. John Piggott, "to carry on the work of the ministry there," for which he was to be paid fifteen pounds per annum as the morning preacher. Mr. Key did not long continue in this connection, as he became a member of the church in Devonshire-square, Feb. 27, 1701-2. In June, the same year, he "was called by the congregation to exercise his gift among them;" and on Feb. 4, 1702-3, he was unanimously chosen to be an assistant to Mr. Adams for one part of the Lord's day, and was also requested to "remove his lectures from Ropemaker's-alley* to Devonshire-square:" to these requests he acceded the 4th of March following.

Several attempts were made by other churches to obtain Mr. Key as their pastor, which, as he was only an assistant minister, was not considered to be dishonourable. It was within the first month after he was chosen by the congregation at Devonshire-square, that he was requested to undertake the pastoral care of the church in Broad-street, Old Gravel-lane, Wapping. In the month of June following, he received a similar pressing invitation from the church at Warwick, and another about six months afterwards, (Jan. 11, 1704,) from a church in Petticoat-lane, London: so great, however, was the attachment of the church to him, that they would not suffer him to accept of either of these calls to leave them.

It seems probable that the latter invitation arose from the uneasiness that had been occasioned by the different views entertained of the transactions of the Assembly at Lorimers'-hall by Mr. Key and his venerable colleague. But there was, say the

* This was a meeting-house near Moorfields, built in 1672 by the Rev. Edward West, M. A. who was ejected from Little Wittenham, Berkshire. At the time Mr. Key preached his lecture here, the Independent congregation was under the care of Mr. John Lewis.* When this place was taken down, the congregation removed to a new place in Aldermanbury Postern.

* See Wilson's History, vol. ii. p. 536.

records, "a universal unwillingness to part with him." On this being communicated by a deputation from the church-meeting, he replied, that "the affection of the church was not more to him than his was to them; that he always eyed the providence of God, and desired so to do; and that he would not remove from this congregation until his call was so clear that we ourselves should be satisfied with the clearness of it."

Mr. Key attended the Assembly at Joiners'-hall in 1705, as a spectator merely, the church having withdrawn from the connection. In December of that year it was resolved that it should be submitted to all the members of the church to call him to the office of joint-pastor with Mr. Adams. At the next meeting, December 27, it is said, "Accordingly, having taken it into consideration, we have considered the qualifications laid down by the apostle for so great an office, and do unanimously agree, that our brother Key is qualified for that office according to the intent of the Holy Ghost, and therefore have concluded, that the church meet this day fortnight at ten o'clock, in order to seek the face of God, and beg his presence with us, and then proceed to the choice of brother Key, accordingly as the Lord shall direct." His call to the office was, with the cordial approbation of the pastor and the whole church, on Jan. 10, 1705-6. On the 24th of the same month Mr. Key informs the church, "that although sensible of his own unfitness for such an office, yet from the entire love he bears to the church, and believing the church bears the like to him, together with the sense he hath of the duty incumbent on him to lay out himself for God the little time he shall continue in this world, he does accept of the office of pastor, and will endeavour to be jointly serviceable to the church with our beloved brother Adams, as the Lord shall enable him."

The ordination ceremony was notwithstanding deferred, on account of some difficulties, until the same month in the next year; when, on the 27th of December, 1706, he was solemnly

invested with the office by Mr. Joseph Maisters and Mr. Adams, praying and laying their hands on him, Mr. Adams pronouncing the following words: "I now declare, by the authority of Christ and this church, that my brother Mark Key is by this church appointed or ordained a joint-elder, pastor, or overseer, with myself, over her." On this occasion a sermon was preached by Mr. Maisters, pastor of the church at Joiners'-hall.

Mr. Key appears to have been a vigilant and circumspect pastor, and a zealous evangelical minister. The church in Devonshire-square, in 1715, contributed ten pounds towards repairing the baptizing-place in Fair-street, Horselydown. This church was one of the first that united in the Baptist fund, in 1717; and the church meeting in Devonshire-square has continued in connection with it till the present day.

Mr. Key's name is found among the subscribing ministers at the Salters'-hall conference; from which we may infer that he was "jealous for the Lord God of hosts," at a time when sophistical ministers were for "breaking down the altars;" or at least when even good men were so far imposed upon by the specious pretence, that voluntarily to subscribe a human exposition of a mysterious doctrine, when a difference of opinion existed as to the meaning of the Scriptures on that subject, would be to acknowledge a human authority in the church; and therefore they preferred rather to be suspected of having given up the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity, and be considered as having joined the ranks of Arians or Socinians.

Mr. Key, after the death of Mr. Adams in 1718, was the sole pastor of the church till his death in 1726. Some idea may be formed of the distress this event occasioned, from the manner in which his death is noticed on the church book:—"It having been reported that it hath pleased Almighty God, in the all-wise dispensation of his providence, to exercise this church with the loss of our well-beloved brother, Mark Key, our late

pastor, and that several of the brethren have had a meeting to consider of the funeral; it was thought proper to propose and agree, 1. That the corpse be carried from the meeting-house, and interred in the burial-ground, Bunhill-fields, on Monday the 27th inst. 2. That a sermon be preached by Mr. Richardson; to begin at four o'clock precisely. 3. That Mr. Noble, or Mr. Wallin, be desired to pronounce a funeral oration at the grave. 4. That the following ministers be invited to support the pall, viz. Mr. Noble, Mr. Wallin, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Rees, Mr. Ridgeway, and Mr. Arnold; all being pastors of churches. 5. That the following pastors and ministers be also invited, viz. Mr. Barrow, Mr. Gill, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Mulliner, Mr. Biddle, Mr. Ring, Mr. Spencer, Mr. Townshend, the Sabbatarian Minister, Mr. Sandford, Mr. Davenport, and Mr. Morton; and that hatbands, gloves, and cloaks, be provided for all the ministers invited. All the brethren are desired to provide themselves hatbands, gloves, and cloaks, for their more decent attendance at the funeral." It is added, "To all which the church unanimously agreed, and ordered it to be entered in the church book. It was also agreed to spend part of Thursday the 30th inst. in prayer, to humble ourselves before God under our afflictive circumstances, and to seek his blessing and direction upon this sad and mournful occasion."

At the proposed meeting, after some time spent in prayer, it was asked, "Whether, upon the death of our pastor, the church do resolve to continue in their church state?" This was carried without any one contradicting. The next month we find them resolving to invite the Rev. Messrs. Wallin, Arnold, Richardson, and Wilson, to administer the Lord's Supper to the church in their turns. In September they invited Mr. Andrew Gifford, as is mentioned in the life of that minister. They state that this resolution arose from being convinced that the hope of the church being supplied with gifts of their own, had expired. It should appear from this statement,

that they had expected that one or other of their own members, who had been encouraged to preach, might probably be acceptable: these were Messrs. John Toms, one of the deacons, Charles Bowler, and Thomas Sandford. The first of these is found among the subscribing ministers at Salters'-hall, in 1719.*

At the church meeting, Nov. 25, 1726, it was stated that the church at Turners'-hall had signified a wish for a union of the two churches, which, after a good deal of difficulty, was consummated June 4, 1727, the church in Devonshire-square agreeing to dissolve its church state in order to unite with church in Turners'-hall, under the care of their pastor, the Rev. Sayer Rhudd. Both churches agreed to assemble at Devonshire-square, but on condition that the public services should be held as they had been during the life-time of Mr. Mark Key, and without interrupting Mr. Richardson and the Pinners'-hall people at their stated seasons of worship. The church, at the period of its dissolution, consisted of a hundred and fifty-eight members, forty-six men and a hundred and twelve women. The history of this church will therefore include that of Turners'-hall after this period.

Mr. Toms, as a deacon and minister, took a prominent part in conducting the business of uniting the two churches. It is said, he pronounced a very seasonable and pertinent discourse concerning the nature and ends of church fellowship, asserting the independency of each church or congregation, and its power to transact within itself all affairs relating to the glory of God, and the edification of its members; for promoting which ends, they might not only form themselves into a body at first, but, if they should see occasion afterwards, dissolve,

* We find that the church had requested Mr. John Toms, and Mr. Richard Bowler, February 21, 1722, to assist Mr. Key on Lord's day mornings.

and give themselves up to another church, or otherwise, as they should see necessary to preserve the above-said ends." There is no doubt that Christians are "called unto liberty," and that no man, or body of men, has any authority to prevent them from exercising in a church relation that liberty in any way "for the glory of God, and their own edification." But then it is equally clear, that they are "not to use that liberty for an occasion to the flesh," by indulging unwarranted fears respecting future difficulties; much less to pretend they have the glory of God in view when influenced by carnal motives, and for the accomplishment of covetous practices. *Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment.*

It is very affecting to record the dissolution of any church of Christ, when the number of churches was so very few compared with the immense population of the city in which they were established. It may not be easy in every case to trace these events to their proper source: the instance before us presents difficulties not easily to be removed. It appears the church was numerous; I should judge much more numerous than that of Turners'-hall; and it appears also to have been united and respectable. There is reason to think, certainly, that the number of respectable ministers at that period was very small; but Mr. Andrew Gifford intimated that he would visit them after Christmas,—a person they had known and often heard among Mr. Richardson's people, by whom it is probable he had been called to the ministry; and yet they resolved to invite the church at Turners'-hall to unite with them. They consulted the Society of Baptist Ministers, and proposed this query; "Whether the uniting of two congregations of Protestant Dissenters (both of the same faith and order) into one body or church, for the celebration of the ordinances of our dear Redeemer, and keeping their several offices, may be properly deemed a dissolution of both churches." The ministers took time to consider the question, but declined giving any ad-

vice respecting it. It could not have been conjectured why so solemn a business was made of the dissolution of both churches, but for the following minute:—"Lord's day, April 16, 1727. The church being stayed after sermon, the messengers aforesaid, (five brethren,) reported, that they had consulted the messengers from Mr. Rhudd's church, and it did appear to them that there was no other way for Mrs. Humphrey's legacy to be preserved, but by our giving up ourselves to that church." Thus it appears, that the consideration of a paltry sum having been left to the church at Turner's-hall, was sufficient to induce 158 members to dissolve the church which the excellent William Kiffin had "planted," and which had been "watered" by the labours of those eminent ejected ministers, Thomas Patient, Daniel Dyke, and Richard Adams, and by the faithful Mark Key; the church which was the second in point of antiquity among the Particular Baptists in London; which had borne the rude storms of persecution under Laud, and from the prelates who succeeded him, in the times of Charles and James; which had prospered exceedingly, while the winds and storms of outward adversity shook its roots, and sometimes stripped off both its leaves and its branches; but which pined, and languished, and died, when left without a faithful pastor "to feed it with knowledge and with understanding." When destitute of a pastor, and subject to the government of a few timid, and it should seem worldly-minded deacons, two of whom were ministers, who probably were desirous of saving their money, which it was necessary for them to subscribe towards the support of a pastor, they resolved to sign their hands to the death-warrant that thus brought the church to destruction, after it had existed upwards of ninety years, and after they had been furnished by the liberality of their forefathers with so excellent a meeting-house,—a privilege which but few of our churches at that period possessed. The names of the 158 members who agreed to this act of ecclesiastical *felo-de-se*, stand recorded on

both the church-books, as if Divine Providence had designed that a monument should be thus raised by themselves to perpetuate their memory, as a warning to succeeding generations, and to lead other churches to adopt the language and manifest the spirit of David, when he prayed, "*If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning: if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy,*" Ps. cxxxvii. 5, 6.

CHURCH IN PETTY FRANCE.

The following accounts of Petty France appear in Stow, and Maitland:—"Without the church-yard of St. Botolph, without Bishopsgate, is a causeway leading to a quadrant called *Petie Fraunce,* of Frenchmen dwelling there, and to other dwelling-houses, lately builded on the banke of the towne ditch by some citizens of London, that more regarded their own private gaine than the common goode of the citie." *Stow's Survey of London,* A.D. 1598. p. 92, 93. "Near these is the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem, upon the streetes side northward from which many houses have been builded with alleyes backward, of late time too much pestered with people (a great cause of infection) up to the Barres." Ib. p. 127. "Petty France, at the west end of Bishopsgate-street church-yard, and east side of Moorfields, (whereon the new streets are situate,) was a street of mean buildings, denominated Petty France, from its being inhabited by people of that nation." *Maitland,* p. 394.

There is no certain account of the pastors of the church in this place earlier than 1678, though it is very probable that it had existed before 1640, and that Mr. Edward Harrison, who signed the third edition of the "Confession of Faith," which had been

published by seven churches in London, in 1644, was its pastor. This conjecture is founded upon the fact, that five persons of that name are among the members of the church in 1678. It appears from the index to the members, alphabetically arranged, entitled, "A Catalogue of the Names of the Members of the Church of Christ meeting at Petty France, first entered the 31st of the fifth month [July] 1676, and from thence continued," &c. that this church consisted of perhaps upwards of four hundred members; and during the period of about twenty-six years, it appears to have been in a high degree of spiritual prosperity. Mr. William Collins, and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe, (of whom accounts have been given in vol. ii. p. 397—407,) "were solemnly ordained elders or pastors of this church, on the 21st of the 7th month, 1673." The former of these eminent ministers died Oct. 30, 1702; and the latter, a short time before the Revolution.

It appears from the records of this church, that during the ministry of Messrs. Collins and Coxe, it received members from, or had fellowship with, the following churches:—in London and its vicinity—Pinners'-hall; Battersea; Johnson-street; Gravel-lane, Wapping; Theobalds; Brentford; Joiners'-hall; Lorimers'-hall; Bagnio-court; Tallow-chandlers'-hall; Goat-street; Richmond; Flower-de-luce-court; Mazepond; and Barbican. In the country—Norwich; Liverpool; Newcastle; Frome; Devizes; Oxford; Abingdon; Moreton in the Marsh; Hemel Hempstead; Southampton; Perton, near Salisbury; Warrington; St. Alban's; Hook-Norton; Dorchester; Bristol; Sudbury; Rochester; Malmsbury; Reading; Newbury; York; Kensworth, Herts; Pirton; Alcester; Plymouth; Goldington, Bedfordshire; Coventry; Taunton; Wells; Luton; Eversholt; Bacup; Croydon; Warwick; Westbury; Newcastle; and Chichester: also in Cumberland; and in Dublin, and other parts of Ireland.

The following curious entry is made Dec. 24, 1676. "Mrs.

Hart, and Hannah, that had been lately servant to brother Collins, did propound for baptisme, and were accepted; onely the administration of the ordinance to them was deferr'd a while, *because by reason of the extremity of the present frost we could not now come at the water.*"

The eminence of Mr. William Collins as a scholar and theologian was very great. He is called by Mr. Piggott, "that learned and judicious minister." He had studied under the celebrated Dr. Busby, and gained his approbation. He had lived several years in France and Italy previously to his applying himself to theology in England. Nor was Dr. Nehemiah Coxe his inferior. Mr. Piggott, no mean authority, designates him "a very excellent, learned, and judicious divine." The learned Dr. De Veil calls him, "that great divine, Nehemiah Coxe, eminent for all manner of learning," &c. The name of this "learned and judicious" minister, of "this great divine," may be seen affixed to a letter, with those of twelve other of the London ministers, in our first volume, p. 417, on the subject of "Whether it was the duty of unconverted men to pray?" This letter demands the attention of all persons, and especially of all ministers.

These were the distinguished scholars and divines that composed the "Baptist Confession of Faith," first published in 1677. The authority for attributing this work to these ministers rests upon the following minute in the records of the church in Petty France, August 26, 1677. "It was agreed, that a Confession of Faith, with the Appendix thereunto, having been read and considered by the brethren, should be published."

It should seem, therefore, that this confession was prepared for the purpose of expressing the faith of that particular church, but was adopted by upwards of one hundred churches at the General Assembly in 1689. It was also resolved, that it should be translated into Latin for the use of foreign churches; but

it is likely that the premature death of Mr. Collins prevented the execution of that design. This confession may be considered as expressing the sentiments of the great body of Particular Baptist Ministers at the present day. It is an unexceptionable form of sound words, and is at an equal remove from Neonomianism and Antinomianism.

From the records of this church it appears, that many churches in town and country were in association after the year 1677. The first association appears to have been held at Hempstead, Herts, April 2, 1678. Dr. Coxe attended it, and, on his return, it is said, "gave an account of the comfortable issue of the meeting of the messengers of the associated churches, and of their desire that for the future some brethren on behalf of this and other congregations in the city, may be, as occasion is offered, appointed to assist them in their meetings," &c.

These associated churches appear to have met about every six months; and one or both the ministers of Petty France generally attended them, "to assist there," as the records say, "on behalf of the church." The association met at the times and places following:—Abingdon, September 28, 1678; London, March 22, 1679; Hempstead, October 6, 1679; St. Alban's, March 16, 1679-80; Abingdon, April 5, 1681; Hempstead, April 18, 1682; London, April 10, 1683.

The church soon after endured a great storm of persecution. Many of the Baptist ministers were imprisoned, and several died in prison.

On May 27, 1682, is this minute:—"Agreed also, in regard of the uncertainty of our obtaining conveniency of meeting as formerly by reason of the present persecution, and our exclusion from Petty France, that the contribution for the poor be made by monthly subscription, and our usual times of breaking bread be altered from three weeks to once every month, to be computed from this day." It does not appear when the church assembled from this period up to December, 1687, there

being an interruption in the records. After Mr. Collins and Mr. Coxe, and others, had rendered James II. the acceptable service of thanking him for his "declaration of liberty of conscience," in July 7, 1687, the Baptists were permitted to "return to their great meeting-houses." The meeting-house in Petty France was one of those intended by that description.

The death of Mr. Coxe seems to have taken place in the beginning of June, 1689. The following entry shows both his poverty, and the Christian kindness of his brethren. "There was a meeting of the brethren at Brother Coxe's, June 12, when it was agreed that something should be raised by subscription for the maintaining Brother Coxe's son, and that this congregation should be moved in it." At the death of this learned man, though, as it should seem, he left but one son, he was so totally unprovided for, that a public subscription was made for his maintenance, among those who had already been stripped of the principal part of their substance by a persecuting hierarchy.

What is said of Mr. William Collins by the learned Mr. John Piggott may be properly introduced here;—"I shall not mention the encouraging offers he had to join with the national church, which he steadily refused; for it was conscience, not humour, that made him a Dissenter."

At the death of Mr. Coxe, one of the members of the church, who had been called to the ministry, Mr. Thomas Harrison, was invited to become an assistant to Mr. Collins. On July 7, 1689, he signified his willingness to accept the office, provided they would suffer him to continue his lecture at Pinners'-hall, to which the congregation consented.

In this year we find him attending Mr. Collins, and Mr. Collett, one of the deacons, as a messenger to the General Assembly at London, September 3, 1689. At the next church meeting, October 8, the following entry throws light upon the manner in which the churches were consulted by their messengers.

It was agreed that the following question be put, viz. "Whether it be the opinion of the brethren, that the substance of the paper at the end of our late Assembly's narrative,* referring to

* "*The Assembly of the Elders, Messengers, and Ministering Brethren, sent by, and concerned for, more than one hundred Baptized Congregations of the same Faith with themselves, from many parts of* England *and* Wales, *met together in* London Sep. 3 to 12, 1689, *to consider of several things relating to the well-being of the same Churches. And having that opportunity, judged it their Duty to clear themselves from those Reproaches cast on them, occasioned by the weakness of some few of their Persuasion, who in the late King's Reign, were employed as Regulators for the Support of his Dispensing Power.*

"There having been many Reflections cast upon us, under the name of *Anabaptists*, as such, as having in the late Times, for our Liberties-sake, complied with the Popish Party, to the hazard of the Protestant Religion, and the Civil Liberties of the Nation: We being met together, some from most parts of this Kingdom, judg it our Duty to clear our selves from the said Reflections cast upon us. And we do first declare, that to the utmost of our Knowledg, there was not one Congregation that had a hand, or gave consent to any thing of that Nature, nor did ever countenance any of their Members to own an Absolute Power in the late King, to dispense with the Penal Laws and Tests; being well satisfied, that the doing thereof by his sole Prerogative, would lay the Foundation of the Destruction of the Protestant Religion, and Slavery to this Kingdom.

"But yet we must confess, that some few Persons (from their own Sentiments) which were of our Societies, used their endeavours for the taking off the Penal Laws and Tests; and were employed by the late King *James* to go into divers Counties, and to several Corporations, to improve their Interest therein, but met with little or no Encouragement by any of our Members; though considering the Temptations some were under (their Lives being in their Enemies Hands) the great Sufferings, by Imprisonments, Excommunications, &c. that did attend from the Ecclesiastical Courts, as also by the frequent Molestations of Informers against our Meetings, by means whereof many Families were ruined in their Estates, as also deprived of all our Liberties, and denied the common Justice of the Nation, by the Oaths and Perjury of the vilest of Mankind, might be some abatement to the severe Censures that have attended us, tho if some amongst us, in the hopes of a Deliverance from the heavy Bondage they

regulators and regulations, was a proper subject for their consideration, and the publication of that paper expedient?" This was carried in the negative. The question was then put to

then lay under, might miscarry, by falling in with the late King's Design. It being also well known that some Congregations have not only reproved those among them that were so employed, but in a regular way have further proceeded against them. From whence it seems unreasonable, that for the miscarriage of a few Persons, the whole Party should be laid under Reproach and Infamy.

"It being our professed Judgment, and we on all Occasions shall manifest the same, to venture our *All* for the Protestant Religion, and Liberties of our Native Country.

"And we do with great Thankfulness to God acknowledge his special Goodness to these Nations, in raising up our present King *William*, to be a blessed Instrument, in his Hand, to deliver us from Popery and Arbitrary Power, and shall always (as in duty bound) pray that the Lord may continue Him and His Royal Consort long to be a Blessing to these Kingdoms, and shall always be ready to the utmost of our ability, in our Places, to join our Hearts and Hands with the rest of our Protestant Brethren, for the Preservation of the Protestant Religion and the Liberties of the Nation.

William Kiffin,	*Benjamin Keach,*	*Thomas Winnel,*
Hanserd Knowllys,	*Samuel Buttall,*	*James Hitt,*
Andrew Gifford,	*Isaac Lamb,*	*Edward Price,*
Robert Steed,	*Christopher Price,*	*William Phips,*
Thomas Vauxe,	*Robert Keate,*	*William Facey,*
John Tomkins,	*Richard Tidmarsh,*	*John Ball,*
Toby Wells,	*James Webb,*	*William Hankins,*
George Barret,	*John Harris,*	*Paul Fruin."*

The reason why the church in Petty France decided against the expediency of printing the above document was, because Mr. William Collins was one of the ministers whose conduct it condemned. We see from it with what impartiality the business of the Assembly was conducted. It is probable that it was submitted to all the churches, as well as to that in Petty France, and that a majority of voices determined the matter.

the congregation, "Whether the money collected amongst them towards the general fund should have a distinct account kept of it, and be disposed of with their knowledge and consent;" and it was carried in the affirmative.

A case of discipline was attended to in 1696, which serves to show the purity of the discipline of this church, and its regard to important doctrines. The following instance, copied from the records, in the year 1696, relates, it should appear, to one of the nine persons* appointed as treasurers to the general fund in 1689, who doubtless was a gentleman of property, from his being appointed to that office. "Mr. Robert Bristow was rejected and cast out of the communion, after much patience exercised towards him, and strenuous endeavours used to recover him out of dangerous errors he was fallen into, viz. the renouncing the doctrine of the Trinity, and particularly the deity of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and so rooting up the very foundation of the Christian religion." These were the views entertained by the great men who were the pastors of this church, respecting the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity, and those doctrines which are inseparably connected with it,—the proper deity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit. It appeared to them that Mr. Bristow's errors were a total rejection and abandonment of Christianity; and therefore, notwithstanding his wealth and former consequence in the church, they excluded him from their communion. '*A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.*' Titus iii. 10, 11.

In the year 1700 a dispute took place in this happy flourishing church on the subject of publicly singing the praises of

* Of the nine persons, three belonged to the church in Petty France;—Messrs. John Collett, Robert Bristow, and Edward Harrison. This last gentleman lived at the Hen and Chickens, Cheapside. Mr. Maurice King, also one of the treasurers, belonged to Devonshire-square; he was a silkman, and lived at the sign of the Mermaid, in Lawrence-lane.

God, which ended in a separation. This affair is thus noticed in the records:—"May 1, 1700, the brethren met to consider a paper delivered into the church concerning singing, and the bringing of it in to be practised in the church. After long discourse two questions were agreed upon;—the first, whether in order thereto the pastor should be desired to preach in favour of singing, which was carried in the negative."

In consequence of these disputes, Mr. Thomas Harrison and many of the people left, and took Lorimers' Hall, at which place we shall have occasion again to speak of that excellent young minister.

Mr. William Collins was thus a second time left alone to fulfil all the pastoral duties. It appears that he and his friends who adhered to him were very decided, as they refused to recognize the separatists as a distinct church, or to dismiss any of their members to it.

It should appear that at this time the church was removed to the meeting-house, Artillery-lane, Spitalfields, a church-meeting being held there, April 30, 1701; so that the church must from this time be known as the church meeting in Artillery-lane, Spitalfields.

This is a well-built good-sized convenient meeting-house, capable of containing about six hundred persons. It was probably built by Mr. Collins's congregation, as there were many rich people belonging to it. It is to be regretted that this should have been built on a leasehold estate, as it is now, and has been for many years past, lost to the denomination.

Mr. William Collins lived but a short time after his congregation removed hither, as he died October 30, 1702. His last sermon was from Matthew ix. 37, 38; *Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.* The following is an extract from Mr. Piggott's funeral sermon for him. "That you that were under his care lay near his heart, and *how greatly he longed*

after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ, I am witness. I, did I say? The God in whose presence I stand, and at whose bar I must shortly appear, is witness. I speak this with so great solemnity, because he mentioned it to me with much affection and tears, and told me how glad he would have been to see you settled with a judicious learned minister before he died; but God saw meet to move him before this desirable thing was accomplished."*

I know nothing more of this church until the meeting of the General Assembly of thirteen churches in 1704, when it was destitute of a pastor. The messengers were Mr. Robert Cheney, Mr. Lionel Sharp, and Mr. James Pope, whose names are among the original members of the Church in Petty France in 1678.

This church was one of the ten associated churches in 1704, which held their general meeting at Joiners'-hall. Before this time Mr. Ebenezer Wilson had arrived in town from the church in Broadmead, Bristol. It is certain that he was settled as the pastor of this church; but the precise time is not known, there being, after the minute of June 7, 1692, at which time Mr. William Collins, the pastor, was prevented by illness from presiding at the church-meetings, a perfect blank respecting the church in Artillery-lane, Spitalfields. The fact appears to have been, that some time in the year 1708 the dispute respecting singing was revived, and Mr. Wilson taking part with the Anti-psalmodists, that the latter resolved on a separation from the church in Spitalfields, and obtained a meeting-house somewhere in Walbrook, where this part of the ancient church of Petty France will be again noticed, until we find it uniting with itself the still more ancient church in Devonshire-square. The members who remained at Artillery-lane, after this separation, having invited Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, and his people at

* For more particulars of the life and death of this great man see vol. ii. pp. 395—403.

Lorimers'-hall, to unite with them, we must trace their history, after this time, in the united churches of Lorimers'-hall and Artillery-lane.

During the time the church assembled in Petty France, although it had been often shaken by the winds of persecution, it took firmer root, and it sent forth its branches to the sea, and its boughs to the rivers. It is not possible to ascertain how many ministers were called out from it, but it appears evident that the following were so:—Messrs. Edward Mann, who succeeded Col. Danvers in the church near Aldgate; Thomas Harrison, who assisted Mr. Collins; —— Gamman, who was a minister at Chatham, (see an account of his sufferings, vol. ii. p. 241;) Emanuel Gifford, pastor of the church in the Pithay, Bristol; Samuel Buttal, afterwards pastor at Plymouth; John Noble, of Tallowchandlers'-hall, Dowgate-hill, London; and Nathaniel Hodges, afterwards of Artillery-lane.

CHURCH AT LORIMER'S-HALL.*

THIS meeting-house is thus described by Maitland, in his history of London:—"A small, but convenient hall, at London Wall." It is supposed that Mr. John Taylor, who was rejected by the church in White's-alley, Moorfields, on account of his having avowed Calvinistic sentiments, and who took this place in 1699, had either left it, or occupied it only once on the Lord's day.

When Mr. Thomas Harrison left Mr. William Collins and his people in Petty France in 1700-1, many of that church, if not the great majority, seceded with him, on account of the church in Petty France having resolved that singing should not be introduced into public worship. This practice formed the feature by which this church was distinguished from their old friends, who soon after removed to Artillery-lane. Mr. Harrison, who

* A Lorimer is a bridle-maker.

appears to have been very eminent for talents, learning, zeal, and usefulness, was speedily removed from his labours. He died at the age of thirty-five, August 14, 1702, a few months before his venerable pastor, of whose church he became a member in the year 1676, at the age of twelve years. For a fuller account of him, taken from Mr. Piggott's funeral sermon, see vol. ii. p. 407—412. Mr. Harrison, who will be again mentioned in the account of Pinners'-hall, preached a Lord's day morning lecture there for several years.

This church was without a pastor in April 1704, when the meeting of the General Assembly was held there for three days. Their messengers were Messrs. Robert Byand, George Richardson, and Richard Wilkinson. It is supposed that the Rev. Nathaniel Hodges became the pastor of this church soon after 1704, and continued so till Mr. Ebenezer Wilson left Artillery-lane in 1708, as he and his people then united with that church, and from that time he was the pastor of the united churches of Lorimers'-hall and Artillery-lane, until he relinquished his ministry.

Mr. Hodges had been educated with a view to the ministry at a Dissenting academy at Taunton. From thence in 1698, when twenty-three years of age, he accepted an invitation to settle as pastor with the church at Plymouth, where he resided three years. His name is signed to a manuscript letter before me, sent by the Western Association assembled at Taunton, June 17, 1701. In the following January, having (as the Plymouth records state it) "succeeded to earthly honours, he left the church, and settled in London." It is likely he succeeded to some property, as he was, it is evident, of a rich family. He appears to have joined the church in Petty France under Mr. William Collins, and it is probable some of his relations were members of that church. The last entry in the handwriting of that excellent pastor records, June 7, 1702, that "brother Hodges was taken into the church."

Mr. Hodges has been already introduced to the reader as

employed to present an Address to King George I, in 1715. A Tory newspaper writer, on that occasion, intimated that he had been brought up to a trade. "Cardinal Wolsey was of as mean extraction as these; and the principal of them, Mr. Hodges, was of a trade that ought not to be thrown in his teeth, considering that it first afforded us that excellent astrologer, John Partridge, and has since given them so good a divine in the person of Mr. Hodges; to which holy science, that humble occupation has a more immediate tendency of its own nature, because it trains a man up regularly to the curing of *soles*."

Crosby says, "His uncle, a gentleman of a great estate, did not approve of his inclination to the study of divinity; and finding he could not be diverted therefrom, nor persuaded to join in the ministry of the established church, where he could have promoted him to some dignity, made him afterwards, as long as he lived, feel the smart of his resentment for his close adherence to what he believed to be truth. Upon the death of his uncle,* when he became by inheritance possessed of a large estate, he laid down his ministry, and had the honour of knighthood conferred upon him by his Majesty George I. He died August 27, 1727, in the fifty-second year of his age, and lies buried in Stepney church-yard, where a fine monument is erected by his lady to his memory."

I find the name of this minister signed to a letter sent to Mr. Peart, of Bromsgrove, in Worcestershire, dated London, Sept. 10, 1717, in connection with those of Dr. John Gale, Messrs. Joseph Burroughs, and Benjamin Stinton. The subject of this was whether the Greek preposition in Matt. iii. 16, which our

* Probably Sir William Hodges, an eminent Spanish merchant, and returned a Member of Parliament for St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall, in 1705 and 1708. He died July 31, 1714, and was buried in the church of St. Catharine, Coleman-street, London. *Noble's Contin. of Granger's Biographical History of England*, vol. ii. p. 207.

translators had rendered *out of* the water, was rightly translated. It is evident from this letter, that Mr. Hodges was considered among his brethren as a person of respectable learning and good abilities.

Mr. Hodges was one of the non-subscribers at the synod at Salters'-hall in 1719, which is all the further information we have respecting his ministerial character. It is probable he laid down his ministry soon after that period, though it is not said at what time it was he received the honour of knighthood. Thus it appears that his "earthly honours" eventually proved destructive to him, at least to his character as a minister.* So true is it, that *it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.* It is a very affecting thing that he who, when young, chose rather to suffer his rich uncle's displeasure than to violate his conscience and abandon his principles, should, after he was forty years of age, be carried away with the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things, and thus become unfruitful. It is not said what became of the "large estate," at his death, except that a part of it was expended in erecting a fine monument over his renowned dust! We have never heard that he left any part of his money to the poor of Christ's flock, or to any charitable institution.

Thus terminated the "earthly honours" of Sir Nathaniel Hodges; the only Baptist minister of whom we have heard that he received the honour of knighthood; the only Baptist minister who laid down his ministry on account of his being

* The apostle Paul was fully convinced of the dangers to which he was exposed, as it related to his ministerial engagements. "I keep under my body," said he, "and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away," 1 Cor. ix. 27. Neglecting to watch against the spirit of the world, Mr. Hodges seems to have exemplified the necessity of that care, as well as to be a standing monument of the awful denunciation in Zechariah against the idol shepherd, &c. ch. xi. 17.

elevated to the rank of a knight, and, like Demas, deserted his friends, having loved this present world. Such instances are indeed rare; but they are deeply affecting, and should teach all ministers, especially if they are rich, or expect to possess riches, earnestly to pray that they may be preserved from the *love* of money, the root of all evil. The following is the inscription upon what Crosby calls the "fine monument." By comparing it with those on the tombs of his contemporaries, Joseph Stennett, Edward Wallin, and others, the reader may be able to judge who possessed the greatest honour. Under the coat of arms is this inscription :—

Sr. Nathl. Hodges, Knt.
Of Bethnall Green.
Obt. the 27th of August, 1727.
Ætatis 52.

After the resignation of Mr. Hodges, the church chose as his successor Dr. Kinch, (of the medical profession, as I suppose,) who was a member of the church in Paul's-alley, Barbican, was called by them to the work of the ministry in 1720, and was settled as pastor here, on April 26, 1721. When the General Body was formed in 1727, he was one of the first committee. He was one of a deputation from that Body to carry an address to court in 1727. In April, 1731, he was reported at the Library as having died during the past year.

Mr. John Weatherley succeeded Dr. Kinch. He had been educated by Mr. Grove, of Taunton, and was a man much respected. A discourse preached at Barbican, 1750, entitled "Irreligion the Ground of God's Displeasure," was his only publication. I find his name in the list of approved ministers of the three denominations in 1732. He died soon after preaching the sermon above mentioned.

He was succeeded by Dr. Joseph Jefferies. He is first mentioned as belonging to Pinners'-hall in the minutes of the Gene-

ral Body, in 1756. He probably preached one part of the day there, and the other at Artillery-lane. He died suddenly in 1783, as he was returning from Mr. Noble's funeral.

The remains of this church removed to Worship-street, and it was dissolved about the year 1800. It is very affecting to find that any part of a church which at one period was so zealous for the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity, and the proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that of the Holy Spirit, (see the account of the church in Petty France, p. 337,) should have been at length swallowed up in the vortex of Socinianism. At what period its ministers became Arians or Socinians is not exactly known; but it was certainly considered a Trinitarian church in the year 1719, because it was invited to unite with the Baptist Fund when the church in Barbican was refused.

CHURCH IN WALBROOK.

I HAVE not been able to ascertain what was the place of worship which the separatists from the church in Spitalfields, formerly under the care of Mr. William Collins, obtained for public worship, but it was situated in Walbrook.

It is apprehended that these were a minority of the members, though they kept possession of the old church records, probably taking out from the book those which related to the church since it had met in Artillery-lane; it is certain, however, with that exception, that the records comprehend the history of the church from 1676 till the time it received into connection the church in Devonshire-square, at which place it continues to assemble.

The records of the separated church are thus described:— "A catalogue of the names of the members of the church now meeting in Walbrook, under the care of the Rev. E. Wilson." Then follow the names of about 120 persons, men and women.

After the names are entered alphabetically, at the opposite end of the Petty France church-book, is added, "A record of the acts of the church, commencing January 4, 1707-8."

It is evident that Mr. Crosby has, in his account of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson and his congregation, confounded the two separations which took place in the church of Petty France. He says, "At the death of Mr. William Collins, pastor of an ancient congregation in Spitalfields, that church agreed to unite with a small church that met at Lorimers'-hall, and to bring in the practice of singing psalms, which had not heretofore been used among them. They chose Mr. Nathaniel Hodges to be pastor of the united churches."

The separation here spoken of was from the church in Petty France, in 1692, before it removed to Spitalfields. Mr. Hodges was chosen, probably to succeed Mr. Thomas Harrison, at Lorimers'-hall, some time after 1704. Mr. Crosby adds, "Several members of the ancient church, and some of considerable ability, were displeased at the practice of singing psalms, and separated from the rest, claiming to themselves the title of the church, because they stood by the ancient constitution and settlement. These, resolving to keep up their church state and public worship, invited Mr. Ebenezer Wilson to come to them from Bristol, and soon after chose him to be their pastor." Now, upon the supposition that the church in Artillery-lane, Spitalfields, chose Mr. Wilson in 1705, then the separation, of which Mr. Crosby speaks, took place between that period and January 1707-8, and every thing becomes plain. After Mr. Wilson and his friends, who were anti-psalmodists, had left Artillery-lane, they who remained seem to have been joined by the people of Lorimers'-hall, who were also for public singing; and Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, the pastor at Lorimer's-hall, became the pastor of the united churches.

The records mention several acts of the church at its commencement in Walbrook, which indicate a prosperous state

June 6, 1708, they agreed to establish a prayer-meeting on a Lord's-day morning "before the public work, as convenient and useful."* They appointed messengers to converse with a woman that had been deluded by the French prophets, who at this time made a noise in the nation. At the next meeting, July 29, they excluded her from their fellowship, for having left her place in the church for a year and a half; for refusing to hearken to frequent admonitions; and "for following those deluded people called the French prophets, whose prophetic speeches, warnings, &c. for want of accomplishment, besides their blasphemous expressions in print and otherwise, are plain proofs that they are not sent of God." The last entry by Mr. Ebenezer Wilson in the church-book, is on September 5, 1712.

The late Rev. Joshua Thompson, in his manuscripts, speaking of Mr. Wilson, says, "He kept a school at Bristol, and was a man of great learning." He was an assistant to Mr. Thomas Vauxe; and during the period of his ministry the handsome large meeting-house in Broadmead was built in 1695. He was the son of Mr. John Wilson, pastor of the church at Hitchin, and was educated under the care of the celebrated Mr. Timothy Jollie, at Sheffield, in Yorkshire. On leaving the academy, he was invited to assist Mr. George Fownes, of Bristol, who died in 1685. Mr. Wilson married a daughter of that excellent man; and perhaps, in addition to his labours, in assisting Mr. Vauxe and preaching to the church, he might keep a boarding-school for the support of his family. He attended the Western Association until the year 1704, and after this removed to London, as has been already stated.

Mr. Crosby says, of Mr. Wilson, "Though he was a worthy man, and a scholar, yet he was not a popular preacher; and as

* In June, 1712, it was allowed that "those brethren who had opportunity, and whose hearts the Lord should open," might have the use of the little room for prayer every Lord's-day morning before sermon.

the people were but few in number, so they continued: yet he had a tolerable maintenance from them. Some of them being rich, and he being generally respected, they contributed largely for his support."

Mr. Wilson died in 1714, and his funeral sermon was preached, but not published, by the Rev. Edward Wallin. He left behind him a widow and seven children, one of whom was Mr. Samuel Wilson, afterwards the respectable pastor of the church in Prescot-street, Goodman's-fields. In the funeral sermon for Mr. Samuel Wilson, by Dr. John Gill, he says, "He was the son of the Rev. Ebenezer Wilson, a worthy minister of Christ in this city."

After the death of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson, the church left Walbrook, and in June, 1716, went to Turners'-hall.

CHURCH AT TURNERS'-HALL.

THIS place was situated in Philpot-lane, which reaches from Fenchurch-street, north, to Little Eastcheap, south, part lying in Langbourn-ward, and the greater part in Billingsgate-ward. It was occupied in 1688 by Mr. Richard Allen, a respectable Baptist minister, who was originally a member of the Baptist church in White's-alley, Moorfields. That church was one of those which belonged neither to the Particular nor General Baptists, but was distinguished as "owning the principles mentioned Hebrews vi. 2;"* amongst which, as the reader will recollect, is found *the laying on of hands.* To the practice of laying on of hands on baptized believers, this and several other churches adhered with very rigid tenacity. Mr. Allen

* The reader may find more information on this subject, under the article "Churches of the Six Principles."

had his doubts whether this institution ought to be made a term of communion, and thought it was a matter that should be considered as indifferent, or at least respecting which forbearance should be exercised, as he questioned whether it was a rite of divine institution in relation to church-fellowship. As he did not keep his opinion private, but declared it openly in the church, it gave so much offence to the other members, that they at length convened the representatives of several other churches to consider this important matter. At an assembly of these churches held at White-street, June 18, 1688, they came to the following grave decision;—"Forasmuch as brother Allen hath this present day, and at several other times, and upon several occasions, denied the ordinance of laying on of hands upon baptized believers to be a principle of Christ's doctrine; whereof complaint has been made, and the matter several times debated, at several church meetings, and adjourned to this day, 'Whether, brother Allen having declared his opinion against this ordinance, it be for the preservation of the truths of the gospel and the peace of the church that brother Allen shall continue in the ministry as a preacher among us;' upon debate of the matter by the elders of the several congregations in communion with us, and of the church now assembled about this matter, the church of Christ do hereby unanimously agree, that brother Allen be for the present suspended from being a minister among us."

Mr. Allen, it should seem, did not wait to know whether his suspension would be removed, but retired to Turners'-hall, where he preached to a small but affectionate congregation, until he removed, with his people, to the church in Barbican, where he succeeded Mr. Thomas Plant in 1695.* In the me-

* Turners'-hall was used for several years by Mr. George Keith, who left the Quakers; and then by Mr. Jacob Jacobs, an Independent.

moirs of that church he will again be introduced to the reader's notice.

The church of Petty France, formerly under the care of Mr. William Collins, which had, since the settlement of Mr. Ebenezer Wilson in 1704-5, been meeting in Walbrook, removed in August 1715 to Turners'-hall.

The records were broken off in September, 1712, after which we find no minute till July, 1716, when it is said, "Brother Sharp, being deacon, died." This was Mr. Lionel Sharp, who was a member of the original church in Petty France in 1675, and has been mentioned as a messenger to the assembly of 1704. It is added, "after which brother Thomas Dewhirst being recommended by the church of Christ meeting at Bacup, in Lancashire, under the care of Mr. Richard Ashworth, we having had before one year's trial of his gifts for the ministry, received him among us a member, August 19, and then gave him a call for the further trial of his gifts."

From the next minute it would seem, that more is intended than appears at first sight, when it was said, "Brother Sharp, *being deacon, died*;" the records thus proceeding: "The church, *being destitute of deacons*, proceeded to election, when our beloved brethren Samuel Humphreys and Benjamin Willmott were chosen and set apart for that work; and the same day we gave our brother Thomas Dewhirst a call to the pastoral office over us."

The circumstance of Mr. Sharp's having been the only deacon of the church, and the immediate choice both of pastor and deacons being made to hinge upon his death, lead to the conclusion, that he was one of the "domineering brethren," who have often been found in our churches, bearing the name, but abusing the office of deacon. Men of this stamp, forgetting that they were appointed to relieve the pastor from the weight of secular concerns and worldly care, and to see that

the poor of the flock be not neglected, have after a few years, especially if there have been frequent changes of pastors, grown up to such consequence in a church, that the people have been either afraid to resist their proposals, or contradict their decisions, and thus have not been able to choose other men to the office, nor even to obtain the settlement of a pastor. In the instance before us Mr. Dewhirst had been preaching a whole year; but this Diotrephes, "being deacon," and the *only* deacon, would not suffer him to be settled as pastor: and though they had among them their "beloved brethren Samuel Humphreys and Benjamin Willmott," yet they could not be chosen as deacons till the time was come for Mr. Lionel Sharp to die; when it should seem, after being forty years a member, and a great part of that time a deacon of the church, his death was considered as a deliverance from bondage, rather than as a matter for regret and lamentation.*

Mr. Dewhirst was ordained to the pastoral office, August 29, 1716. The manner in which it was conducted is thus stated. "The church beginning in prayer among themselves, by the consent of the church Mr. Edward Wallin, being pastor of a sister church, was made choice of to open the nature of the work of the day. When that was done, a brother of the

* The office of deacon in our churches will necessarily give a man much influence if he should live forty years in that office. If this be used in filling "the office of a deacon well," such a man is a great blessing to the church: but if it be employed in the spirit of a Diotrephes, no man can be a greater curse. The church should never suffer the number of deacons to be reduced so low as two, lest the survivor of these should refuse to unite with any other brother, and should do every thing himself; or rather should neglect every thing, as it is evident Mr. Lionel Sharp did, who, it appears kept the church, from the death of Mr. Wilson, from meeting to transact business. The church becomes "the house of bondage," until such unworthy men are removed by death from an office, which they will neither fill nor relinquish.

church began in prayer publicly; after which the church chose the aforesaid Mr. Wallin to be their mouth in ordination: which ordination being performed by the extension of hands, another brother closed the work of ordination with prayer. Brother Mark Key, pastor of a sister church, gave a word of exhortation to our pastor; and likewise brother John Skepp, pastor of a sister church, gave a word of exhortation to the church; brother Dewhirst closed the work of the day with prayer."

I find that the next year, 1717, this church agreed to have an interest in the baptizing-place, Horselydown, and paid £10 to Mr. Benjamin Stinton towards the expenses of repairing that old building. They also resolved in October in that year, that a weekly meeting of prayer should be held at some of their houses, "to beg of God that he would bless us as one of his little tribes in his dear Israel, and that he would revive us." From this it should appear that the church was now reduced to a low condition, and that the members began to feel the necessity of praying for the influence of the Holy Spirit to bless the ministry to their edification, and to the conversion of sinners. It may be hoped that the proposed meeting was an extraordinary meeting for prayer. If the church had been without a weekly meeting for united prayer and supplication, their declension was not marvellous. The church after this appears to have increased, several persons being baptized: discipline, likewise, was attended to, and "wicked persons were put away from among them."

In the year 1717 the "Baptist Fund" was established, and in 1720 the church at Turners'-hall appears to have united in it by appointing Mr. Humphrey their messenger. The records contain a statement of a measure adopted soon after, by the managers, to appropriate £300 South Sea Stock, and the interest arising from it, "for the specific purpose of educating young ministers of the Particular persuasion, who have been baptized

in water." It was farther determined that the person so educated should be one who is "joined to a church of the denomination; who has so far exercised his gift with them, as that they may judge he hath promising ministerial abilities; and who is recommended by them as one sound in faith and conversation."

The name of Mr. Dewhirst is found among those of the subscribing ministers at the Salters'-hall controversy in 1719. There are no other particulars of him that I am acquainted with. He does not appear to have attained to any eminence among the churches during the seven or eight years that he was the pastor of this church.

There is no account of the manner in which Mr. Dewhirst closed his ministry; but July 5, 1723, I find Mr. Edward Wallin was requested to preach once a day for some time at Turners'-hall, in Philpot-lane.

There was no successor to Mr. Dewhirst until 1726, when Mr. Sayer Rhudd was called to the pastoral office. This he accepted May 23, 1725, and being regularly dismissed from Mr. Wallin's church in Fleur-de-lis Yard, he was "publicly set apart to his office by laying on of hands and prayers, with the assistance of the elders of several of the baptized churches in London of the Particular Baptist denomination." Mr. Hammon was also set apart to the office of deacon at the same time.

At the close of the year 1726, the church in Devonshire-square signified a wish, that the church at Turners'-hall would unite with them, and that Mr. Rhudd might become the pastor of the two churches to assemble in future in Devonshire-square. On December 25, 1726, two messengers, Messrs. Blackwell and Webb, delivered the following message in writing:— "Brethren and sisters, we, as messengers from the church of Christ meeting in Devonshire-square, late under the pastoral care of Mr. Mark Key, deceased, to this church of Christ under

the pastoral care of Mr. Sayer Rhudd, request, that you will please to remove from the place of your meeting to that of Devonshire-square, (each church keeping up its church-state for some time,) till a union of both may be agreed upon to mutual satisfaction; and that our brother Rhudd be the pastor over the whole community. To which our request we hope for a favourable answer."

The messengers being withdrawn, and the church having approved their application, they were on their return informed by Mr. Rhudd, "That they took the invitation kindly, and designed, God willing, to meet with them in Devonshire-square Lord's day se'nnight."

During the interval, Mr. John Rhudd, a brother of the pastor, who had spoken several times before the church, was called to the work of the ministry, April 5, 1727.

At the time appointed they accordingly removed to Devonshire-square; and, after much arrangement and many regulations, the church in Devonshire-square having dissolved its church state, as has before been related, Mr. Rhudd thus addressed the church at Turners'-hall:—"My brethren and sisters, I am now to address myself to you, over whom the providence of God has placed me as overseer. You have been witnesses of what has passed on the part of this church, late under the pastoral care of Mr. Mark Key, deceased. They have dissolved their church state, and now offer themselves for communion to you; and forasmuch as you have already signified your readiness to receive them into your communion by giving them an invitation, your silence now is a sufficient testimony that you recognize and confirm your satisfaction in admitting them as members with you."

In consequence of this union of two churches belonging to the Baptist fund, they agreed to assert their right in it, and to send a competent number of messengers. These were Messrs. Toms, Bowler, Clarke, and Hammon: the fund agreed to re-

ceive four messengers for that year, but resolved not to admit more than three in future.

After this the union was completed by the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and the history of these churches must in future be considered as those of Devonshire-square and Turners'-hall.

UNITED CHURCHES OF DEVONSHIRE-SQUARE AND TURNERS'-HALL.

SAYER RHUDD, M.D. was, in December 1727, recognized as the pastor of this church, formed of the members of the two churches above-mentioned. The church consisted of perhaps two hundred and fifty members. But this plan of accommodation did not promote the spiritual prosperity of the church. Only about six years had elapsed, when, in April 1733, Mr. Rhudd signified his intention of visiting France, which step the church refused to sanction. Notwithstanding this refusal, and their earnest remonstrances, he the next month put his design into execution; and the church, resenting his disrespectful treatment, agreed that his salary should be withheld till he gave them satisfaction. His connection with this church was consequently dissolved; but we shall have to speak of him again under the articles of Westminster and Snow's-fields.

George Braithwaite, M.A. succeeded Mr. Rhudd. He was ordained March 28, 1734, when Dr. Gill gave the charge to the minister from 2 Tim. iv. 16; and Mr. Samuel Wilson preached to the people from Heb. xiii. 17.*

Mr. Braithwaite was born in the year 1681, at Fornacefells

* These sermons which had been previously delivered on a similar occasion were printed: the former with the title of "The Duty of a Pastor to his People:" and the latter entitled, "The Duty of the People to their Pastor."

in Lancashire. He was intended from his infancy, by his parents and rich relations, to be a minister of the church of England, with a view to his ultimately succeeding his uncle, who was a celebrated preacher in that part of the kingdom. He was first sent to a grammar school near his native place; then to a noted seminary in Yorkshire; and finally to the University of Oxford. There he attended the various lectures, and the usual course of college exercises, and from his diligent application to his studies procured the degree of Master of Arts. The illness of a near relation occasioned his going home, and different circumstances prevented him from returning to Oxford.

It was in youth that he became a partaker of divine grace; and he soon after embraced the sentiments of the Baptists, before he knew that there were any people in the world who held the necessity of a credible profession of faith in order to baptism, and that immersion in water was the only scriptural mode in which that ordinance should be administered. He became a member of the church in Cripplegate, at the time that his countryman, Mr. David Crossley, was its pastor.

By this church his gifts for the work of the ministry were exercised; and, on being satisfied that he had received gifts for edifying the body of Christ, they solemnly, on a day of fasting and prayer, sent him forth "to testify the glorious gospel of the blessed God," wherever God in his providence might open a door to him for executing that sacred office.

His relations and friends, desirous of drawing him away from the despised Dissenters, made him very considerable offers if he would conform to the church of England; but having acted from conviction in refusing to submit to the imposition of articles of faith upon his conscience, he decidedly and promptly sacrificed all the prospects of worldly advantage and secular honours, that he might serve God with his spirit in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

He determined, when he was first awakened to a sense of his lost condition as a sinner, and had tasted that the Lord was gracious, if God, "counting him faithful, should put him into the ministry," that he would devote the first fruits of his labours to the poor and ignorant people of his native country. He therefore went into Lancashire; and, a divine blessing attending his ministry, he gathered a church. It is not said where this was; but in 1724 he preached to the church at Tottlebank. While here, he sold a house to the people who met at Torver (or Tower) and Caniston, and they converted it into the meeting-house of Hawkshead-hill. In this place he preached two or three years, supplying also that at Sunny-bank, in Torver parish. After this he preached for several years at Bridlington in Yorkshire, with great reputation and success. While here he had to bear his testimony (which he did with great zeal) against prevailing intemperance. He published on this occasion a work entitled, "The Nation's Reproach, and the Church's Grief; or a serious needful Word of Alarm to those who needlessly frequent Taverns and Public Houses, and often spend the evening there. In a Letter to my Neighbours and Countrymen." His faithful dealing in this letter procured him many enemies, even in his congregation, so that his situation as pastor became uneasy. This being known to his friends in London, they introduced him to the knowledge of the church in Devonshire-square. After preaching to them for a few months they invited him to undertake the pastoral office, which he accepted.

Mr. Braithwaite was now fifty-three years of age; and, ripened by age and experience, he entered upon his work in the church with affectionate zeal; and his ministry was highly acceptable, and not without considerable success.

He published a sermon which he preached at Devonshire-square Dec. 19, 1736, occasioned by the death of Mr. Humphrey Frend. This was entitled, "The Saints' Desire in Time,

and Happiness in Eternity;" founded upon Ps. cxvii. 15:—*As for me, I shall behold thy face in righteousness,* &c. Mr. Frend was not a member of Devonshire-square church at the time of its dissolution.

In 1741 he published another funeral sermon, preached at Devonshire-square Aug. 30, on account of the death of Mrs. Mary Newnham. This was founded on 1 John v. 4, and is entitled, "The Conflicts and Conquests of the born of God; or Faith's Victory and Triumph over the World." Mrs. Newnham was either a member of the church at Turners'-hall before the union took place, or joined the church under the ministry of Mr. Braithwaite.

This excellent man was in the habit of writing a diary for upwards of thirty-two years, in which he endeavoured to keep an exact account of the frame of his spirit, in the closet, the family, and the world. From this account, which was read after his death, it appears that he had been enabled to maintain a close walk with God. The pious reflections with which it is interspersed discover the breathings of a truly devotional and serious mind. His preaching was plain, serious, and affectionate; and in his public prayers, his gift was remarkable. In this exercise he was distinguished for a holy importunity, and expressed himself with so much fervour, that his manner was thought to have injured his constitution. In his conversation he was friendly, affable, and courteous, and took every opportunity of introducing something that might tend to edification. His temper was naturally warm, and this led him occasionally to speak unadvisedly with his lips; but he was sensible of this, and would often acknowledge it with regret and sorrow. His worldly circumstances, in the former part of his life, were easy and abundant; but he had never received much for his labours, and the expenses of bringing up a large family had greatly reduced them. In the latter part of his ministry he met with some sharp and unexpected trials, which greatly affected his

spirits, and tended in no small degree to break his constitution, which was naturally good. He lived long enough, however, to see the clouds gradually disperse; for which he heartily thanked God not long before his death.

His decay was gentle and gradual, and for the most part without pain or sickness. His understanding was clear and unclouded; his conversation heavenly; and his satisfaction as to a better world, full and uninterrupted. He would say to the honour of sovereign grace, he had no fears, no doubts, and longed to be at home, *where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary soul is at rest.* At length, it pleased God to grant him his desire to depart and be with Christ. His death was so very easy, that, without a figure, he might be said to fall asleep in Jesus, July 19, 1748, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, having been in the ministry more than forty years, the last fourteen of which were spent in the service of the church and congregation at Devonshire-square.

He was buried in Bunhill-fields, and his funeral sermon was preached at his late place of worship, July 24, by Mr. Samuel Wilson, pastor of the church in Prescot-street. The text is, 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, &c.* which passage of Scripture had been selected by Mr. Braithwaite.

In this sermon, from whence most of the above particulars have been extracted, Mr. Wilson says respecting his deceased friend; "I persuade myself that every one who was acquainted with the remarkable modesty and humility of the Rev. George Braithwaite, deceased, will readily acquit him from the charge of vanity in the choice of these words as the subject of his funeral discourse. I shall not easily forget the serious and very affectionate manner in which, a little before his death, he spoke to me upon this head, 'My dear brother,' said he, (for that was the manner of the good man, always warm and pathetic,) 'I have nothing to boast of; far be it from me; but I bless God, he has, through his grace, enabled me in a measure to be faithful. And

I look upon it as a singular mercy, that I have not to charge myself in a single instance, in which I have been left to baulk my conscience, as to any one truth of the gospel, or ordinance of Christ, out of fear or in favour of man.' Glorious mercy! (adds Mr. Wilson,) to have in the view of eternity, the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had had his conversation in this world; and at the same time to see his obligation to a higher hand, and thankfully to acknowledge that by the grace of God he was what he was."

The church in Devonshire-square is at present under the ministry of Mr. Timothy Thomas.

CURRIERS'-HALL, CRIPPLEGATE.

THIS church was that which had been collected by the Rev. Hansard Knollys. At the time of his death, September 19, 1691, it assembled at Broken Wharf, Thames-street; at which meeting-house it is understood the meetings of the General Assemblies from 1689 to 1692 were held.* After the decease of its vene-

* As Mr. Knollys has been stigmatized as of fifth-monarchy principles, and as the sentiments of many godly ministers upon that subject are but little known, the following extract from one of his works will explain them:—"That the next glorious appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, will be his virtual and spiritual coming in his saints and sanction (as the Bridegroom of his church) to marry her sons, (Isa. lxii. 4, 5,) and by them to reign over the nations with power and great glory a thousand years here on earth, Dan. vii. 27. There are but *three* special kinds and times of Christ's coming. 1. His coming in the form of a servant in the days of his flesh, Phil. ii. 9. 2. His coming as Judge at the last day, when he shall judge the quick and the dead, (2 Tim. iv. 1,) called his appearance the second time, Heb. ix. 29. Both these are his personal appearances, or his coming in his own person. But between these two appearances, or comings of Christ in his own person, there is witnessed by

rable pastor, Mr. Robert Steed succeeded till 1703, and in his time the church removed to Bagnio-court, Newgate-street, where they assembled in 1705. Soon after this they removed to Curriers'-hall, better known by the name of Cripplegate meeting, where they assembled for nearly a century. The lease expiring in 1799, the congregation, which was then greatly reduced, was unable to renew the lease, and they engaged the meeting-house in Red Cross-street, close to Dr. Williams's Library.

Mr. Richard Claridge assisted Mr. Steed: he had been a parish minister at Poppleton; he soon after, 1700, embraced the sentiments of the people called Quakers. While a Baptist he united with Mr. Kiffin in recommending the little work on Baptism by Mr. John Norcot.

Mr. David Crossley succeeded Mr. Steed in 1705, and served the church a few years. He was originally of Barnoldswick, in Craven, Yorkshire. He was baptized August 6, 1792, by Mr. John Eckells, of Bromsgrove in Worcestershire, and became a member of the church under his care. He was called to the work of the ministry September 26, 1792. As the letter of recommendation that was given him upon his being called to the ministry is not only curious, but is probably a specimen of the manner usually adopted by our churches at that period, it has been thought worth inserting.

"A letter of recommendation given to brother David Crossley, sending him forth to the ministry, viz.

the holy prophets and apostles, and recorded in the holy Scriptures of truth, another kind of Christ's coming at another time. And that is his coming as the Bridegroom, and as the only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords, (1 Tim. vi. 14, 15. Rev. xix. 16;) which is his virtual, spiritual, powerful, and glorious coming in his saints and sanction, and by them to marry his Jerusalem, Isa. lxii. 4, 5. *So shall thy sons marry thee*, and with them to reign over the nations and kingdoms of the world a thousand years on earth, Rev. xi. 15—17."

"To the churches of Christ baptized upon profession of their faith; the church of Christ at Bromsgrove, in the county of Worcester, prayeth, that grace, mercy, and truth, may be multiplied unto you from God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Whereas it hath pleased our heavenly Father to give the Spirit of grace and divine illumination to our dear brother David Crossley, which hath so powerfully wrought upon him, that, having received from the Lord abundant satisfaction touching the ordinance of believers' baptism, he was, upon profession of his faith towards God, and repentance from dead works, baptized by our revered pastor John Eckells, at Bromsgrove, the 10th day of the sixth month, 1692, and is in full communion with us in the things of the Lord Jesus; and having had a sufficient proof of the grace and gift of God bestowed upon him, and adjudging him to be a person fitly qualified for preaching the gospel and baptizing, (though, alas! who is sufficient for these things?) we, by virtue of authority given us by the Lord Jesus Christ, have called our brother forth to preach the gospel and baptize, wheresoever the providence of God shall open a door to his ministry. And that his labours may be blessed from above with suitable success, we commend him to God, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, begging that he will give a mighty increase to his endeavours in the Lord. Amen.

"Signed the 26th of the seventh month, 1692, in the name of the church,

JOHN ECKELLS, Pastor,"
(and several others.)

When Mr. Crossley quitted London, probably about 1710, he went into the north of England, and was for several years pastor of the church at Tottlebank, Lancashire. He was a very popular minister, and was instrumental in gathering three or four churches. It must not be disguised,

though it leaves the name and character of this popular useful minister under a cloud, that he degraded his sacred office by falling into some awful sin, for which he was compelled to discontinue preaching the gospel. At an association of Baptist churches held at Rawden, May 1719, one of their minutes records as follows: "Mr. David Crossley, who had been an eminent minister, but who had been for some time guilty of scandalous sins, was called before the ministers, who with the deepest compassion reproved him. He seemed both sensible and sorrowful; and the ministers set apart seven days for prayer with him." In the year 1724 he was still considered a disorderly minister, and not any of the London ministers would undertake to apply to the Fund on his behalf. Just at the close of his life, he maintained a correspondence with the justly celebrated George Whitfield. That extraordinary minister wrote a recommendation to two treatises of Mr. Crossley's, signed July 29, 1744; from this it should seem that his character as a reputable minister was re-established. He died in September, 1744, aged seventy-five, having kept a school for his support in his old age. He is reputed to have been the largest man in the county. He was buried at Goodshaw. Some further particulars of Mr. Crossley will be given in the account of the church at Bacup, Lancashire, from the Appendix to the Memoirs of the Rev. John Hirst, who died in 1815, by the Rev. James Hargreaves.

John Skepp. It does not appear at what time exactly this worthy minister was chosen to succeed Mr. Crossley at Cripplegate; he was pastor of the church in 1715, how much sooner does not appear. He had been a member of the church at Cambridge, under the ministry of the famous Mr. Joseph Hussey. From the account of Mr. Hussey, it should seem that he had pressed himself into the ministry not only without the consent of the pastor and the church, but in opposition to their united opinions. However this might have been, (and if such irregularity of conduct was manifested by him, we shall not attempt to justify it,) he became an excellent ser-

vant of Christ. This assertion is founded upon the following testimony of Dr. Gill to his character. "Mr. John Skepp was a man of singular talents and abilities; of very quick, strong, natural parts; of great diligence and industry in acquiring useful knowledge; a warm and lively preacher of the gospel; a zealous defender of the special and peculiar doctrines of it: whose ministry was blessed to many souls, for the conversion of some, and for the edification of others." Dr. Gill speaks of him also, as "being personally and intimately known by him, and whose memory was precious to him and to many Christians now living." This was written by Dr. Gill in 1751.

Mr. Skepp's name is found among the subscribing ministers at Salters'-hall Synod in 1719. He died soon after, in 1721. He wrote only one work, and this was not published till after his death. This was entitled, "Divine Energy; or the efficacious Operations of the Spirit of God upon the Soul of Man in his effectual calling and conversion, stated, proved, and vindicated. Wherein the real weakness and insufficiency of moral suasion, without the super-addition of the exceeding greatness of God's power, for faith and conversion to God, are fully evinced. Being an antidote against the Pelagian error."

In the dedication of this work to the church, Mr. Skepp says, "Your foundation, as to gospel order, was skilfully and successfully laid in the very beginning of the troublesome times, by the indefatigable pains and care of that eminent servant of and sufferer for Christ, Mr. Hansard Knollys;* and your walls were

* If Mr. Skepp meant to intimate that Mr. Knollys was of the sentiments propagated in the work on "Divine Energy," respecting the non-invitations of the gospel to the unconverted, nothing could have been more erroneous. Mr. Knollys was one of those ministers who, as Mr. Skepp expresses it, used an Arminian dialect in addressing the unconverted. This "wise master-builder" thus exclaims, "O ye *unconverted* sinners, both professors and profane, will you accept of, and receive now a word in *season* of *spiritual* counsel? Then I will instruct you how you

beautified by the labours and success of that evangelic son of consolation, Mr. Robert Steed. These two were the chief master builders, by whose blessed ministry you were built, and continued upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

Mr. Skepp says, respecting his reasons for undertaking this work, "That he had heard and read of much contempt thrown upon the doctrine and preaching of the Spirit's work, as if it was not necessary to make the gospel ministry effectual for illumination, conviction, and conversion, and for carrying on the work of faith with power." He exclaims, "A sad day it is, when men, to make themselves popular, take upon them

that are *miserable* may become *happy*, and you that are in a *damnable* state, may get into the state of salvation, before Christ come from heaven to judge the quick and the dead, and before you die." He then instructs them to *consider* they were *dead* in trespasses and sins, and, being without Christ, were without saving and sanctifying grace;—to *consider* their need of Jesus Christ;—and to "*consider* that God offered Jesus Christ to poor, lost, miserable sinners, (Rev. iii. 17, 18,) yea, to the chief of sinners, (1 Tim. i. 12—15,) upon gospel terms of free grace, (Isa. lv. 1—7,) without exception of persons, and without respect of price, (Rev. xxii. 7.) Be but *willing* to receive Christ, and the work is done." He adds, "Open your hearts to Christ when he knocks at the door of your souls, and calls you to come to him, to receive him, and let him come into your hearts by his Holy Spirit and sanctifying grace, Rev. iii. 20." "Not that you can do *those things* of yourselves I have told you; without Christ you can do nothing, John xv. 8. but it is your duty to do them; and it is the free grace of God, to work in you to will and to do, according to his good pleasure, (Phil. ii. 12, 13,) that he so working in you, you may work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

See a work entitled, "The World that now is, and the World that is to come; or the first and second coming of Jesus Christ. By Hansard Knollys, a servant of Jesus Christ. Rev. i. 19. London, printed by Thos. Snowden, An. 1681." 12mo. pp. 48.

to hector, and to run down the Spirit's work in regeneration and conversion," &c.

This work was reprinted in 1751, when Dr. Gill wrote a preface to recommend it; and it has been again printed in 1815, by Mr. James Upton, the present worthy pastor of the Baptist church in Church-street, Blackfriars'-road.

Mr. Skepp had not the advantages of a liberal education; but he acquired by laborious application, after he engaged in the public ministry, a considerable acquaintance with the languages in which the Scriptures were written. He particularly excelled in the Hebrew, which he acquired under a Jewish teacher; from whose instructions also he obtained a considerable degree of Rabbinical learning. At Mr. Skepp's death Dr. Gill purchased most of his Hebrew and Rabbinical books; as he had been first urged by Mr. Skepp to apply himself closely to those oriental studies, in which he afterwards made so much proficiency.

Mr. Skepp was succeeded by Mr. Humphrey Barrow in the year 1722. He continued the pastor of the church till the year 1727, when he died. He attended the meetings of the Baptist Fund, and of the Society of Ministers at Blackwell's Coffee-house, during that period. No other particulars concerning him have come to the knowledge of the writer.

It is probable a Mr. John Moreton was employed to supply the church after Mr. Barrow's death; but it is certain that he never was settled as their pastor. His name will be again introduced as pastor of the church in Glass-house-street, Swallow-street.

The next pastor at Curriers'-hall, was Mr. John Brine. He was born of parents in low circumstances, at Kettering, about the year 1703. When very young he was employed in the staple manufactory of that town, so that he had but few advantages from education. He was baptized, and joined the

church then under the care of Mr. Wallis, at an early age; having received his first religious impressions from the ministry of his intimate friend Mr. John Gill, who was a member of Mr. Wallis's church, and who occasionally preached at Kettering, while residing at Higham-ferrars. Mr. Brine, even while compelled to labour for his daily subsistence, embraced every opportunity to cultivate his mind, and at an early age had acquired a respectable acquaintance with the learned languages, and with other branches of useful knowledge. He was called to the ministry by the church at Kettering; and after some time was invited to undertake the charge of the church at Coventry. While here, he was allowed four guineas by the Baptist Fund, to purchase books, in 1726; and the next year four pounds for the same purpose. He continued here till he removed to London, at the beginning of the year 1730. His situation in the metropolis was increasingly agreeable to him, as it afforded him the opportunity of associating with the companion of his youth, and his spiritual father, Dr. Gill. The religious views of these truly great men were perfectly congenial upon religious subjects; they were both Calvinists of the supralapsarian scheme, and believed the doctrine of the elect being *actually* justified from eternity; but they had no conception of any person's being authorised to consider himself in a state of salvation who had not really believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as his justifying righteousness. Though, in the opinion of the writer, the notion of justification, antecedent to a living faith upon the Son of God, is the root of all the Antinomian errors, yet he is far from believing that Mr. Brine or Dr. Gill, or those who think with them upon that subject, are Antinomians: this they fully prove by their zeal for the necessity of practical godliness, as the fruit of sanctification and the evidence of justification; and by their so strenuously contending that the law is a rule of life to believers.

Mr. Brine was of great weight in the denomination, and was

a very pious and useful minister. After Dr. Gill relinquished his Wednesday-evening lecture in Great Eastcheap, it was carried on for several years by him; and he was one of the lecturers on the Lord's-day evening at Devonshire-square. He was also a very considerable writer, whether the number of his publications or the ability displayed in them are considered. In 1732 he published "A Defence of the Doctrine of Eternal Justification, from some exceptions made to it by Mr. Bragge." In 1734 a funeral sermon for Mrs. Margaret Busfield, entitled, "The Covenant of Grace opened." In the same year a fifth of November sermon, preached at the Devonshire-square lecture, entitled, "God the Defence and Glory of his Church." In 1735, a funeral sermon for Mr. Hugh Lloyd, entitled, "The Believer's Triumph over Death." The same year, a sermon "On the Ordination of Deacons." In 1736, "A Discourse on the Prayer of Jabez; being the substance of several sermons preached at Cripplegate." In 1737, "Remarks upon a Pamphlet entitled, Some Doctrines in the Supralapsarian Scheme impartially examined by the Word of God." In 1743, "The certain Efficacy of the Death of Christ asserted, in answer to Dr. Watts's Work entitled, The Ruin and Recovery of Mankind." In the same year, "The Christian Religion not destitute of Arguments sufficient to support it; in answer to a Pamphlet entitled, Christianity not founded upon Argument." The same year, "The Modern Question concerning repentance and Faith examined with candour; a refutation of Arminian Principles." In 1746, "A Vindication of some Truths of Natural and Revealed Religion; in answer to Mr. James Foster." In 1747, A funeral sermon for Mrs. Anne Wildman, entitled, "The chief of Sinners saved through Christ." In 1749, "A Sermon at the Monthly Exercise, April 20, entitled, The Nature of true Holiness explained." In 1750, "A Treatise on various subjects." The same year, "A Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. John Ryland, at Worcester, July 26, 1750, entitled, The solemn

Charge of a Minister considered." The same year, "The Christian Duty and Divine Efficiency represented, preached at Cripplegate, Nov. 11, 1750." Also, "Some Account of the choice Experience of Mrs. Anne Brine, as written by herself, and collected out of her letters." The same year, "The Causes of Salvation and Vocation considered, preached at Crispin-street, December 22, 1751." In 1752, "The True Sense of the Atonement for Sin, by the Death of Christ; an Answer to Mr. Taylor, of Norwich." In 1753, "Motives to Love and Unity among Calvinists who differ in some points; an Answer to Mr. Alverly Jackson." In 1754, "The proper Eternity of the Divine Decrees, and of the Mediatorial Office of Christ, asserted and proved: a Sermon preached at the Monthly Exercise, September 12, 1754, from Prov. viii. 22, 23." In the same year, "A Vindication of Divine Justice in the Infliction of Eternal Punishment for Sin; in Answer to a pamphlet entitled, The Scripture Account of a Future State considered." In 1755, "Job's Epitaph explained; a Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Elizabeth Turner." The same year, "Some Mistakes in a Book of Mr. Johnson's, of Liverpool, entitled, The Faith of God's Elect, &c. noted and rectified." Also, "A Charge of publishing a palpable Falsity, exhibited against the Authors of the Monthly Review, on the subject of Eternal Punishment." In 1756, "Diligence in Study recommended to Ministers; a sermon preached at the ordination of Mr. Rist, of Harlow, in Essex, December 15, 1756." The same year, "A Sermon preached at Great Eastcheap, entitled, Doctrines of the Imputation of Sin to Christ, and the Imputation of Righteousness to his People." In 1757, "A Sermon preached at Great Eastcheap, April 15, 1757, entitled, The Gospel not absurd, nor contrary to justice, nor licentious." In 1758, "Animadversions upon the Letters of Theron and Aspasio; in an Address to that ingenious Author." The same year, "A Funeral Sermon preached at Hemel Hempstead, for the Rev. Clendon Dawkes, December 15,

entitled, The Knowledge of future Glory, the Support of the Saints in present Troubles." Also, "The Imputation of Christ's active Obedience to his People, and the Merit of it demonstrated; a Sermon at Great Eastcheap, December 27." In 1760, "A Discourse at the monthly meeting in Goodman's-fields, July 19, entitled, Grace proved to be at the Sovereign Disposal of God." The same year, "A Sermon preached at Great Eastcheap, December 31, entitled, Christ the Object of God's eternal Delight." In 1761, "A Sermon entitled, The Opposition of Flesh and Spirit in Believers." The same year, "A Sermon preached at the Monthly Exercise, Unicorn-yard, February 19, entitled, Ancient Prophecy proved to be Divine." In 1762, "A Sermon entitled, A Right to Eternal Glory through the meritorious Obedience of Christ, proved to be consistent with the absolute freedom and sovereignty of Divine Grace, as the origin of it." The same year, "A Sermon preached at Kettering, May 23, entitled, The Glory of the Gospel considered." In 1764, "A Sermon preached at the Monthly Exercise, April 20, entitled, Sin reigns not, nor shall reign in the Saints." In 1765, "The Baptists vindicated from some groundless Charges brought against them by Mr. Eltringham."

Mr. Brine was a Christian of exemplary life and conversation, and cultivated the Christian tempers with assiduity, and was an ornament to the religion he professed. His amiable character procured him general respect; nor would he admit that the fears entertained by some of his friends were well founded, that his doctrinal sentiments would lead any to licentiousness. He had been twice married. His first wife was a daughter of the Rev. John Moore, a Baptist minister at Northampton, by whom he inherited Hutter's Hebrew Bible, which by him was esteemed an invaluable treasure. This excellent woman, with whom he had enjoyed much conjugal happiness, died August 6, 1745. Her funeral sermon was preached and published by Dr. Gill. It

is not said who his second wife was, but she survived her husband upwards of twenty years.

Mr. Brine resided for many years in Bridgewater Square, but during his last illness he took lodgings at Kingsland, where he died. Not long before his decease, he expressed the state of his mind by saying, "I think I am of sinners the chief, of saints the least; I know that I am nothing, but by the grace of God I am what I am;" which words he ordered should be inscribed on his tomb-stone. His death took place Feb. 21, 1765, in the sixty-third year of his age. He left positive orders that no funeral sermon should be preached for him; notwithstanding he had preached so many for others. His request as to this particular, was partly but not entirely complied with. His very intimate friend Dr. Gill preached on the occasion to his own people from 1 Cor. xv. 10. "*By the grace of God I am what I am.*" In May following the doctor preached the same sermon at St. Alban's, and afterwards published it. In a note appended to the Sermon, the Doctor says of Mr. Brine: "I am debarred from saying so much of him as otherwise I could do, we both being born in the same place, and myself being some years older than he, and from his being among the first fruits of my ministry. I might take notice of his natural and acquired abilities, his great understanding, clear light, and sound judgment in the doctrines of the gospel, and the great deep things of God; of his zeal, skill, and courage in vindicating important truths, published by him to the world, and by which *he being dead, yet speaketh.* In fine, I might observe to you that his walk and conversation in the world was honourable and ornamental to the profession which he made, and suitable to the character he sustained as a minister of Jesus Christ, all which endeared him to his friends: but I am forbid to say more."—Mr. Brine was buried in Bunhill-fields, where, upon his tomb-stone may be seen the following inscription:—

Here lie interred, the remains of
The Rev. JOHN BRINE,
Who departed this life
Feb. 21st, 1765,
In the 63rd year of his age.
His ministerial abilities were very extraordinary,
And his zeal and faithfulness
In asserting and defending the great truths of religion
Equally conspicuous.
Not long before his decease,
He expressed his sentiments in the following words:
"I think I am of sinners the chief,—of saints the least:
I know that I am nothing,
But by the grace of God, I am what I am."
Also
MARY BRINE,
Widow of the above JOHNBRINE,
Obiit 31 Jan. 1784. Ætat. 86 years.

Mr. Brine was in person short and thick, and he had rather a forbidding countenance, that was not calculated to possess strangers strongly in his favour; but his manners were very much those of a gentleman. He was a man of considerable attainments in learning, and he excelled in his knowledge of the learned languages. The high character given him by the upright Dr. Gill, is sufficient to lead all impartial persons to conclude that he was a holy man, and a faithful minister of Christ. The late Rev. John Ryland used to express his opinion of him by saying of Bunhill fields, "There lie the ashes of the three great Johns;—John Bunyan, John Gill, and John Brine."

The volume of his works entitled, "A Treatise on Various Subjects," was reprinted in 1813, by the Rev. James Upton.

The church in Currier's Hall, Cripplegate, was one of those which first united in the Baptist Fund, in 1717. The Messengers, were Mr. James Watson, and Mr. James Kirby, with the Pastor, Mr. John Skepp. This church subscribed £150 at the

commencement; the annual collections were not much more than £20. In Mr. Brine's time, they usually amounted to about £24. The church was reduced very small at the close of our period, being not more than thirty members. It continued its relation to the fund, till within a few years past. Those who remained, united under Mr. Franklin, who now preaches in Red-cross-street.

CHURCH AT PINNERS'-HALL.

THIS meeting-house was situated in Pinner'-hall-court, and was considered as one of the most celebrated Places of worship among the Protestant Dissenters. It was an ancient building of a moderate size, and its roof of a very peculiar construction. There were two tiers of galleries, one above the other, on three sides of the building, so that it would contain a very considerable number of people. On these accounts, as well as for its central situation, it was for upwards of a century, the resort of large congregations, not only on the Lord's day, but at the Tuesday morning lecture. This lecture was established during the reign of Charles II. and some of the most eminent Presbyterian and Independent ministers supplied it. At the expiration of the lease, in 1798, it was removed to Artillery Street, but is now carried on at New Broad Street; but the attendance is almost reduced to nothing, notwithstanding the respectability of the ministers by whom the sermons are preached.

The congregation which originally used Pinners'-hall, was of the Baptist Denomination; one of the very few which admitted of mixed communion. It was formed at some period before the restoration in 1662, and the size and manner of its being fitted up, with six galleries, seem clearly to indicate that the congregation was both large and opulent.

We have no account of the ministers who supplied this congregation earlier than 1662. But it is well known, that many very eminent Baptist ministers had preached in London during thirty years before that period, and doubtless this was one of the places in which they laboured. One of the sermons printed in Mr. Bunyan's works was preached at Pinners'-hall.

The first person who preached here, that I have met with, was one of the ejected ministers, Anthony Palmer, M. A. He was violently ejected from his parish living at Bourton-on-the Water, in Gloucestershire, by some of the neighbouring gentry. An account is given of Mr. Palmer in vol. ii. p. 164.

It is not said at what time he came to London, but it is probable he was driven from Bourton by the rage of persecution. I find that in June, 1667, he assisted at the ordination of the Rev. John Wilson of Hitchen, being accompanied from London by Mr. John James.

In the year 1672, I find the elders of the church at Bedford, mentioning Mr. Palmer in a letter they sent to a gentlewoman, Mrs. Mary Tilney, one of their members, who had removed to London, (see vol. ii. p. 37.) In this they speak of him as a minister "of long continuance in the city," who, with others mentioned, "had shewed forth their faith, their worship, or good conversation with the word."

Anthony Wood, the virulent Oxford writer, speaking of Mr. Palmer, says, "he carried on the trade of conventicling to the last, and thereby obtained a comfortable subsistence from the brethren." At length, after having passed through much evil and good report, he departed in peace, Jan. 26, 1678, in the 60th year of his age, and was buried in the burial ground adjoining Old Bedlam, near Moorfields.

Mr. Palmer is said to have been a man of good ministerial abilities. Bigland, in his collections for the county of Gloucester, gives the following account of him: "The high esteem in which his memory is held by his followers, compensates for the extreme

severity with which the royalists have marked his character. It may be candid to determine from such opposite descriptions, that he was a man of strong parts, enterprizing and undaunted in the prosecution of what he thought his duty; and it is but just to allow, that no part of his private life could justify any suspicion of his integrity." The works published by Mr. Palmer, are enumerated in a note, vol. ii. p. 166.

Since publishing the second volume, I have met with a volume of Mr. Palmer's works, entitled "The Gospel new-creature; wherein the work of the Spirit in awakening the soul to get pardon of sin and an interest in Jesus Christ, is plainly opened. Discovering the false refuges and vain hopes for heaven of ignorant and formal professors, and the way of being a new creature in Christ." To which is annexed, a small treatise, entitled, "The Tempestuous Soul calmed by Jesus Christ. By way of comfort to Deserted Souls. The third edition. By A. Palmer, Preacher of the Gospel at Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, [printed] 1743."

The preface to the first of these works, is dated Bourton-on-the-Water, Jan. 23, 1657. In this he speaks of having published some years before, *The Tempestuous Soul calmed*, &c. which had been extensively read. The fourth edition before me, printed at Cirencester, 1743, has an epistle dedicatory, addressed "To my dear father, brothers, and sisters, and others of my beloved kindred and friends, &c." It is composed of the substance of several sermons from Matt. xiv. 23—27. As a specimen of the style and talents of the writer, I extract the introductory paragraph: "The words contain an entire work and miracle of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that we need not look for coherence; they are usually opened to set forth the presence of the Lord Jesus with his church in all the tempests that come upon it; which (I conceive) may without wresting, be also used to discover the presence of Christ, calming a particular soul in all the tempests that befal it; at least by way of alle-

gory it will hold; as Austin says, there is such a spiritual use to be made of every miracle of the Lord Christ's. And in this sense I shall make use of them, and so unfold them into these six observations,—1. When Jesus Christ draws in a soul to himself, he usually raiseth a tempest in the soul. *There arose a tempest,* &c.—2. The soul, when there is a tempest, it comes in a perishing condition to Jesus Christ, *Lord save us, we perish,* &c.—3. Jesus Christ seems for a time to take no notice of a soul in such a tempest and perishing condition, *He was asleep,* &c.—4. True faith may be mixed with much weakness and fear, and yet may engage the heart of Christ to succour, *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?*—5. A word from Christ, can rebuke that tempest upon a soul, *He rebuked the winds,* &c. 6. The soul that is thus calmed, is filled with the wonders of Christ's power and love. *They marvelled saying, What manner of man is this, that the winds and the sea obey him?*" The volume consists of 293 octavo pages, and proves the author to have been a good divine, and a very awakening practical preacher.

George Fownes, succeeded Mr. Palmer at Pinners'-hall in 1678. He was the parish minister at High Wycombe for many years, but voluntarily quitted it before the Restoration. It is likely he removed to London, as he is stated to have preached a lecture in Lothbury. It does not appear that he was pastor at Pinner's-hall more than a short period, as he went to Bristol in 1679, to succeed Mr. Hardcastle. In addition to what is said of Mr. Fownes in vol. ii. p. 536, the following is an extract from the old church records of the church in Broadmead: "1685, on the 29th of November, our pastor Brother Fownes died in Gloucester goal, having been kept there for two years and about nine months, a prisoner, unjustly and maliciously, for the testimony of Jesus and preaching the Gospel. He was a man of great learning, of a sound judgment, an able preacher, having great knowledge in divinity, law, and physic, &c.; a

bold patient sufferer for the Lord Jesus and the gospel he preached."

The next minister of Pinners'-hall, was Richard Wavell, A. M. He was a very excellent intrepid minister. He told his people, at Pinners'-hall, at the time when the laws against Dissenters were rigorously prosecuted at the close of the reign of Charles II. that "if they would venture their *purses*, he would venture his *person*;" which he did, preaching constantly three times on the Lord's day, at different places, and was often taken. It is probable that Mr. Wavel was an independent. I find in the records of the church of Petty France, at the history of the commencement of that church under Messrs. William Collins, and Dr. Nehemiah Cox, the following entry: "Upon the 16th of the third month, 1675, sister Faith Moulton, who had formerly walked with Mr. Palmer, was received into this congregation, those with whom she formerly walked, giving testimony of her good conversation to the messengers, sent by the Church to enquire concerning that matter."*

On a head-stone in Bunhill-fields, on the south side of the road, not far from the entrance, is this inscription: "This adjourn to the family vault of the late Rev. Richard Wavell."

Whether Mr. Wavell was an independent or not, it is certain his successor Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Jeremiah Hunt, was. The church was perhaps then considered as among the Independent churches; the reader may find interesting accounts of both those excellent ministers in Wilson's History, vol. ii. p. 260, 270. The successor of Dr. Hunt, Dr. James Foster, was of the Baptist denomination, and on that account must have a place in the history of this church. †

* As this refers to a period three years before the date given of the death of Mr. Palmer, I do not know how to understand the expression "who had formerly walked with the church under" his care.

† During the reign of King William III. Sir Humphrey Edwin, while Lord Mayor of London, carried the regalia of the city to the meeting-house

Before, however, I proceed to the memoir of that popular though alas! erroneous minister, I shall introduce some accounts of several distinguished gentlemen who were baptized members of the church while under the care of Baptist pastors, and who continued members during the period of Mr. Wavell's and Dr. Hunt's ministry.

The first of these was that truly great man Mordecai Abbot, Esq. receiver-general of his Majesty's customs, a baptized member of this church. This "noted Baptist," as Crosby calls him, died in the prime of his days, on Feb. 29, 1699, aged forty-three. He was buried, says Noble, in the church of St. Luke's Middlesex;* his epitaph speaks thus highly of him:

'Here Abbot, Virtue's great example lies,
The charitable, pious, just, and wise;
But how shall Fame, in this small tablet, paint
The husband, father, master, friend, and saint?
A soul on earth, so ripe for glory found,
So like to their's who are with glory crown'd,
That 'tis less strange such worth so soon should go
To Heaven, than that it stayed so long below.

Noble says, that a Portrait painted by Richardson, and engraved by White, was prefixed to his life, published in octavo 1700. He conjectures that Mordecai Abbot, Esq. deputy pay-master of the land-taxes in 1700, was his eldest son.†

The biographer of Mr. Joseph Stennett, speaks (see vol. ii. p. 489) of "the very great intimacy which he had with Mordecai Abbot, Esq. receiver-general of his Majesty's customs, as very much enlarging his acquaintance with the higher classes of persons who visited Tunbridge Wells," &c. He then adds,

at Pinner's-hall. This trifling instance of unnecessary pomp, furnished a pretext in the next reign, for passing the *Occasional Conformity Bill.*

* This is a mistake, as he was interred in Bunhill-fields burying-ground.

† Biographical History of England, from the Revolution to the end of the reign of George I. by the Rev. Mark Noble, F. A. S. vol. i. p. 160.

speaking of Mr. Abbot,—"That great and good man, who passed with so much reputation through several considerable posts, and was so highly esteemed by King William, *continued in them all a strict Nonconformist;* and was so far from being ashamed to own those with whom in religious matters he agreed, that he took all opportunities, even before persons of superior rank, to give Mr. Stennett such marks of respect, as rendered him uneasy; till he was convinced Mr. Abbot did it designedly to manifest the regard he had for his character. His premature and sudden death, happening at a time when Mr. Stennett was in very ill-health, together with the loss of an eldest daughter, had nearly proved fatal to his own life." An epitaph found in Mr. Stennett's works, vol. iv. p. 240, shews the affectionate respect he had for him, and the high estimation in which he held his character: this has been printed, vol. ii. p. 490.

There is one trait in the character of this distinguished man, which entitles it to great commendation, because it shews the consistency of his conduct, and the force of his principles, in regard to a subject which at that period very much agitated the public mind; namely, what was called "occasional conformity." Many of the rich Dissenters, rather than not share in the honours of the state, which they had so essentially contributed to preserve from Popery and tyranny, were in the habit of having occasional communion at the Lord's Table with the church of England. It is well known that King William had endeavoured to procure the abolition of the "Test and Corporation Acts" in order that all Protestants who took the Oath of Allegiance, might be eligible to posts of honour and distinction under his government; but the high-church party prevented the accomplishment of his wishes, insisting upon it that *the church was in danger* from such a proposed innovation. The consequence of this was that for the purpose of getting offices of trust and magistracy, the Dissenters were ensnared into a violation of their dissenting and Christian principles; till

at length the inconsistency of their conduct exposed them to the malice and power of their enemies, who procured towards the end of the next reign, the Bill against "Occasional Conformity," &c.

But Mr. Abbot, though *he passed through several considerable posts under the government; yet* CONTINUED IN THEM ALL A STRICT NONCONFORMIST. He imitated *Moses* in that particular rather than *Joseph*. *Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God,* than to *swear by the life of Pharaoh!* He had not so learned Christ,—

> 'And make the symbols of atoning grace,
> An office-key, the picklock of a place;
> That infidels may prove their title good,
> By an oath dipped in sacramental blood.'

Whoever chose to frequent the "qualifying office" at St. Martin's church, he would not. It is probable that the honourable conduct of Mr. Abbot was in conformity with that of the Baptists in general, some of whom between the years 1688 and 1708 were found filling posts of distinction in corporations and under the government.

The sentiment expressed, that the Baptists in general opposed the absurd and wicked practice of taking the Lord's Supper as a qualifying test for civil offices, rests upon the fact that Mr. Joseph Stennett, who was at that time their most eminent minister, and who may fairly be presumed to speak their sentiments, opposed most strongly such conduct. In his works, vol. iv. p. 339, there is a letter to Mr. J— B—, dated Cheapside, Nov. 27, 1710, on the subject "Of Occasional Conformity to the Church of England." It thus commences: "Sir, according to your desire and my promise, I here send you some of the principal reasons, why I think *the members of our congregations ought not to receive the Lord's Supper in the Church of England.*" These reasons are, 1. "The great difference between

the constitution of our churches, and that of the church of England." 2. "That those who communicate with the Church of England, are necessitated in so doing to comply with such ceremonies and modes, at the administration of the Lord's Supper, as are no where prescribed in the holy Scriptures to be used on that occasion." 3. "The perversion of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in the Church of England, by making it a civil test, is another thing that renders it unwarrantable for the members of our churches to communicate with them. For this is so great a prostitution of this ordinance to sinister ends, and so contrary to the original design of it, that many of the members of that church are themselves not a little ashamed of it, and look upon it as a profanation of the holy Supper."

The reader is referred for the illustration of these and other reasons against the practice, to the letter itself; and we must now return to give some further particulars of the excellent man, Mr. Mordecai Abbot, whose exemplary conduct in protesting practically against such inconsistencies in the presbyterian Dissenters led to this digression.

The funeral Sermon for Mr. Abbot was preached at Pinners'-hall, by the Rev. John Piggott, his intimate friend, and is published in his volume of sermons, entitled, "A Funeral Sermon upon the sad occasion of the death of Mordecai Abbot, Esq.; preached March 17th, 1699-1700. This was dedicated to "the mournful relict," &c. In this Mr. Piggott says, speaking of Mr. Abbot, "He has run his Christian race, and received his unfading crown: he has pressed through an ill-natured world with an unspotted name; for envy itself could not stain his character." It appears that the deceased had attended the public worship there a month before, where now his death had collected the congregation. The text from which Mr. Piggott preached is, Thess. iv. 13, 14. The first paragraph of his sermon is expressive of the great worth and excellency of Mr. Abbot's character.

"The melancholy air that sits on every countenance, and the sad solemnities that attend our meeting at this time, give sufficient intimation of what I am come about; I need not tell you that it is to preach a funeral sermon, and whose death has given me the sorrowful occasion; for the deceased gentleman's worth was so well known, and the want of him is so much felt, that the COURT, the CITY, and the CHURCH of GOD are not a little sensible who it is that is ravished from them."

In concluding his discourse the eloquent preacher thus draws the character of his late lamented friend;—"And is he dead? Well, but his name lives, and will be fresh and fragrant to posterity. And I cannot do justice to his memory, without taking notice of those graces and virtues that eminently shined in his conversation and conduct; for *the memory of the just shall be blessed, and the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance.*

"I am not now to give the character of one that dwelt in a shade, but of one whose public employs exposed him to continual view; so that I doubt not of a crowd of witnesses to attest the truth of what I shall say. I confess, to collect all that was excellent and imitable in the deceased gentleman, is too big a task for so unskilful a person as I am; who can but lay the dead colours of his character, and must leave the finishing strokes to more artful hands, to men of better judgment, of greater compass of thought, and exactness of style. I must own I am at a loss where to begin, and what part of his excellent character I shall insist upon; but I think his piety towards God may properly enough be spoken of in the first place.

"He began very early to be religious, devoted to heaven the flourishing bloom of his youth, the first and best of his time; he had well studied and digested the great articles of the Christian faith, and had right notions of the person and Mediatory work of Christ, which had a mighty influence upon his whole conversation: for though he lived in a crowd and hurry

of business, yet he lost not his religion in the midst of it, but kept close to the private and public duties of divine worship.

"With what seriousness and diligence did he attend on sermons, and what pains did he take in the writing and repeating of them; which was the more extraordinary, because his public employs engaged him in writing, even to toil and fatigue.

"He was not a gentleman that affected singularity, or pretended to more purity than other Christians; but there was a native gracefulness that attended his acts of piety and devotion, which he managed without pomp or noise: this was an evidence of his great humility, a grace very conspicuous in him, as some of the poorest in this place cannot but have observed, to whom he carried it as if they had been his equals; which added a mighty lustre to the rest of his virtues.

"His zeal for spreading the great truths of the gospel was strong and regular, bright and flaming; for notwithstanding his many necessary avocations, he would redeem time to advise and assist in the promotion of substantial godliness.

"His sincerity was very extraordinary and visible, for he appeared always with great freedom, simplicity, and plainness in conversation; he detested all reserves and disguises; it was too mean for him to appear in masquerade, though *a la mode*; integrity preserved him from the meanness of flattery, and he preserved his integrity amidst a thousand temptations.

"He was a true Nathaniel, who by the grace of God (abating the common frailties of human life) might be said to have *kept himself unspotted from the world*, for he acted like Joseph in the court of Pharaoh, only with this difference, that he had not learned to swear by his life.

"In his family he was very exemplary, gave great encouragement to the beginnings of piety, but deeply resented the negligence of servants or children that should absent themselves from family-worship.

"The company he most delighted in, was such where he

might either do good or receive it; and indeed I may say, that (like the Master he served) *he went about doing good:* for as he sought out objects to exercise his charity upon, so he would thank his particular friends when they told him of any that were deserving of his alms, and would as cheerfully relieve them in the most generous and noble manner. He was never deaf to the complaints of the poor and miserable, nor blind to the marks of their poverty; neither did he shut his heart, his purse, or his door against them; he did not only wish them well, and give them soft language, but afforded them solid supplies. He was truly that liberal man whom Solomon speaks of, that deviseth liberal things: for as *he was created in Christ Jesus to good works, so he did abound in all the fruits of righteousness and charity, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God the Father.* And though he was thus rich in good works, yet his charitable distributions were never attended with the sound of a trumpet, but dispersed to multitudes in the most silent and secret way. *He delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him; the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.* Yet in all this he observed the rule of our Saviour as near as possible, *not letting his right hand know what his left hand did.*

"He gave very liberally, though very privately, to encourage the bringing up of a pious and learned ministry in Ireland; and understanding that such a design was forming in London, he offered most generously to encourage it: but before it could be accomplished, cruel death fettered those hands that were always active in dispensing the most noble charities.

"And I think it no contemptible branch of his character, that he paid a deference and respect to all that were of the sacred order of the ministry, under what denomination soever they passed: though his ears were not servilely bored to any; for he did not look on them as lords of his faith, but helpers of his

joy; yet, I say, he was not wanting to afford them the testimonies of his respect. He gave liberally to support several lectures; particularly he encouraged that which is carried on in this place; for he was a gentleman of universal charity to all that bore the image of Christ.

"He was very tender of the reputation of all men; and as he could not endure to hear the follies of men made a matter of diversion, so he always deeply resented the reproaches and calumnies that are too commonly the sauce of conversation, and looked upon a man's good name as too valuable to lie at the mercy of every jester: so that I may say he was as free from rash censures, as he was from deserving them.

"He was always ready to compose any difference betwixt contending parties, which he did with that dexterity and impartiality, that the man was suspected to have a very bad cause that declined his arbitration.

"As to his acquitting himself in his public employ, it was with that honour that few men in an age do; he was so little charmed with the glitter of wealth, and his mind was so imbued with the principles of the Christian religion, that he thought it below him to raise his estate by the mean practices of craft or violence, bribery or oppression.

"He feared God and honoured the king, and did not meddle with those that are given to change: his loyalty to his present Majesty, William, the king of Great Britain and Ireland, and the remarkable services he has done, in contributing towards supporting the credit of the nation at a time when it run very low, are too well known to need reciting here.

"Should I speak of him as a husband, a parent, a master, or a friend, I may say without an hyperbole, he had few equals under heaven; for never did I see a more affectionate husband, tender father, pleasant and faithful friend. Yet all these things that I have mentioned, and a great many more I have not time to name, that are lovely and of good report, could not prevent

his being seized with a mortal sickness: *For what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.*

"His illness was more violent and dangerous than was generally apprehended, till within a day or two before his death: he then being asked concerning his hopes of eternal life, declared, *They were fixed on the satisfaction and obedience of Christ, and that upon the righteousness of the Redeemer alone he rested for the pardon of his sins and everlasting happiness.* But immediately after this he grew delirious, and so was rendered incapable of discoursing distinctly concerning divine things; yet even while he was thus indisposed, he desired me to pray with him, and told me that he heartily joined. Indeed a few hours before he died he lay a little composed, and we imagined that some revival would have ensued; so apt are we to flatter ourselves with the belief of that which is the matter of our earnest wishes. But alas! one hour sunk all expectation of life, and the next put a period to it.

"Thus lived and died that admirable person whose decease has occasioned this discourse; and though he be dead, yet he speaketh, and his works praise him more in the gate, than I have done from the pulpit. Is he dead? he is not gone out of the world, but removed to a better part of it; he has only changed his place, his company, and work. Therefore you his sorrowful surviving half, and the rest of his mourning friends should not think on him as lost, but as set at liberty; not as decaying amongst the clods of the valley, but as shining on an illustrious throne. Stop your tears, for were he sensible of your grief, and capable of making a pause in the midst of his hallelujahs, he would say to you that survive, *Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves.* Therefore let us all think what improvement to make of this sudden and surprising providence."

Mr. Thomas Hollis, another eminent person, was a member of the church even before the pastorate of Mr. Palmer. He died

Sept. 12, 1718, and had for more than sixty years belonged to the church in Pinners'-hall: consequently must have been one of those who had endured the fire of trying persecutions, and who had ventured his *purse* at the time Mr. Wavell was so bold in the cause of Christ.

Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Hunt preached and published his funeral sermon. The character he gives him in the preface is, he says, "exactly just, though it may by some be esteemed blameable for its shortness."—"He had," says, Mr. Hunt, "an early turn for religion. His mother dying when he was about twelve years of age, he expressed an extraordinary and uncommon degree of sorrow; and his father, to allay and direct his grief, tells him, *worldly sorrow worketh death, but godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of;* which, by the blessing of God, proved a happy occasion to give a right turn to his thoughts: and attending Mr. Fisher at Sheffield, he had the change to salvation, which the Apostle speaks of, under his ministry, according to his own apprehension.

"His temper and complexion were naturally warm; this, when he had received a serious and religious ply, occasioned an uncommon zeal for the honour of God, and the interest of Christ, and for these great and valuable purposes he early devoted part of his increase. He maintained ever in his mind a lively sense of the evil of sin, and arrived to a considerable share of Scripture knowledge. He walked in the ordinances of the Gospel, and in communion with this church above sixty years, near the period of time which is allotted to man in this world. His faith was strong, steadily trusting in God, and relying on his promises. His patience was remarkable; though he was so unhappy as to be blind many years, I never heard him make the least complaint, the several years I had been acquainted with him. He trained up his children in the knowledge and practice of religion, and set before them an example of holiness, and in particular of public, private, and secret devotion, which,

by his instructions, he recommended to them; and was so happy as to see his pious care successful. If he had given any offence, as sometimes it would happen through the warmth of his temper, he would not disdain to ask pardon, though of an inferior, conscious it was the command of the Lord. He delayed not doing good to his death; but during his life cast about how he might be serviceable to his relations; and in a particular manner to the ministers of Christ, wherein he greatly abounded. His charity was not confined to a party, though it might extend more to those who were of his own persuasion, being sincere, and thinking himself in the right. He denied himself, and lived frugal, that he might more extensively express his goodness. Various methods he took to be publicly useful; distributing books proper to encourage religion and virtue, promoting schools for instruction of the poor to read and write, and contributing to building of places of worship. He erected and founded two churches at Rotherham and Doncaster, and established schools at each place for teaching youth; communicating in his life to their maintenance, but bequeathing some encouragement after his decease. He freely contributed to the building of a place at Sheffield, and when that proved too little, he liberally imparted to the building of a larger; and purchasing the less, converted it into an almshouse, wherein sixteen poor persons dwell, to which he has left a small endowment. He was so happy, as to live many years in full assurance, formed on Scripture grounds, (for he used to say, faith and repentance were the work of a Christian every day,) and founded on the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, of an endless state of rest and happiness. And though through great age he at last declined, the images and ideas which the Scripture furnished him with, were the last that were effaced in him. When he was in his dying agonies, which were stronger than usual, at those advanced years, he was asked, whether he desired to be with Christ? And he an-

swered, with an uncommon strength of voice, 'Yes! yes!' Thus he *lived to Christ*, and we have no reason to doubt, *but death proves to him gain.*"

It is but seldom a minister has to describe a character of such uncommon excellency. Mr. Hunt speaks of him as "being most liberal to those of his own persuasion, being sincere, and thinking himself to be right." Were then the benefactions he bestowed to promote the cause of religion, and education, and humanity, at Rotherham, and Doncaster, and Sheffield, given to the Baptists at those places? If this were the fact, we have never yet known it: or, if that were not the case, it is pleasant to be informed from so good an authority, that these, though liberal were inferior to many other works of charity among those of his own denomination. It is highly gratifying to perceive "the work of faith, and patience of hope, and labour of love," abounding in this aged saint; and though afflicted for years with blindness, yet supported by his evangelical principles, under the burdens of old age, and the agonizing pains of death. Doubtless "for him to live was Christ, and to die was gain."

This worthy gentleman left two sons, Messrs. Thomas and John Hollis, who were also Baptists, and members of the church in Pinners'-hall. The name of Mr. Thomas Hollis is found among those of the friends of Mr. Benjamin Keach, to repel the slander that had been cast upon the character of that worthy minister by Mr. Russen in his work on infant-baptism.

Mr. Thomas Hollis, junior, was the eldest. He has been already introduced to the reader as the treasurer of the Baptist Fund. He joined the church about the year 1680, when not much more than twenty years of age, and at the time Mr. Wavell was the pastor. But notwithstanding the minister was an Independent, he was baptized on the profession of his "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," and continued an honourable member for nearly fifty years; he died January 31, 1730, in the seventy-second year of his age.

"He was," says Crosby, "as noted for public works of charity as his father, and inherited not only his estate, but his graces also."

His memory will be perpetuated in New England so long as "Harvard College" continues, as the professors of philosophy and mathematics are called the "Holissian Professors," out of respect to (as he is called by Crosby) this "worthy, pious, and generous gentleman." The donations of Mr. Hollis to that college, exceeded those of any other of its benefactors. He founded two professorships in it, one for divinity, the other for mathematics, and natural and experimental philosophy, Out of the income or interest of his donations, he ordered fourscore pounds per annum of their [American] money, to each of his professors, and ten pounds each per annum to ten poor scholars, of reputable characters, designed for the work of the ministry, as a help to defray the charges of their education; and twenty pounds per annum to the college treasurer, for the time being, to reward him for his care and trouble in managing the donations which he sent them. Besides these, he gave them a curious apparatus for mathematical and philosophical experiments, and Hebrew and Greek types, to be used for printing; and at different times augmented their college library with very valuable books, either from himself, or procured by him from his friends.

Some opinion might be formed of the high estimation in which Mr. Hollis was held, from the following extract from his funeral sermon preached by his pastor the Rev. Dr. Hunt.

"When he was a young man he made a public profession of Christ, and joined himself to this society, of which he has been a member about fifty years. The sense he had of the obligation he was under to this, and of the advantages that arise from complying with it, made him ever press it upon others, and recommend it to their practice. He was careful to observe attentively his own conduct, and for that reason wrote memoirs

in short hand for many years, which he afterwards committed to the flames. His love of the Scriptures soon appeared. When business invited him abroad into France, and other places, at that time a young man, the New Testament was his constant companion. Public worship, and in this society to which he stood related, he steadily and constantly attended; and was seldom or rarely absent, nothing but sickness, or something very extraordinary, preventing him. His respect to ministers, for their works sake, was great and unusual. He was pleased with their conversation, and especially when it was instructive. He never allowed himself to speak more severely of any of the performances of preachers, than that he should not choose to sit constantly under such a ministry. He was very steady in family worship, and regular in the time of performing it, to which the smallness of his family did not a little contribute. He was, when in business, constant and regular, and so good a manager of his time, that he always redeemed a part of it for the improvement of his mind by reading. He was careful in the choice of his books, and would often say, that the little leisure he had made it necessary. Towards the close of his life he told me, that he had laid aside the reading of such books as required great attention, and contented himself with those which were wrote in a more easy, and practical manner, and were fitted to raise and excite devotion. How well he behaved to his relations, you, who are his relatives, are perfectly apprized; with what prudence and faithfulness he advised in any affairs of consequence; and with what tenderness and compassion he received the news of any distress, that in the course of providence, did arise to any of you. His public spiritedness was remarkable and uncommon. Distant and remote countries, as well as Britain, will miss him, and lament his death. The communities to which he stood related received instances of his distinguished bounty; and what

makes this part of his character the more shining, is, that his goodness was not confined, or restrained to a party.

"Two years before his death, feeling his strength to abate, he lived in a constant expectance of his dissolution. In his last illness, before his senses failed him, desirous only that his relations would do what might satisfy themselves, and not expressing any solicitude about the event, he discovered a calmness and serenity of mind, which was agreeable to all about him. When one of his relations put him in mind of the pleasure that he must have from a review of his well-spent life, though it was in the Scripture-scheme no foundation for a claim to merit, he expressed his satisfaction, and approved the distinction. And to the same relative, in his latest moments, he declared his affection to all his relations, the church in particular to which he stood related, and to all the churches of Christ. Thus died this good man: thus he dropped like a shock of corn fully ripe, in the seventy-second year of his age." This sermon is dedicated to "Mr. Nathaniel Hollis, Mr. John Hollis, brother, and Mr. Thomas Hollis, nephew."

But if his death was lamented in London, it was much more so in America. "No sooner," says Crosby, "did the death of this worthy pious gentleman, reach the distant churches in New England, but from the highest to the lowest they seemed affected with the sense of the greatness of their loss, by the death of this their most generous and noble patron of learning and religion."

The Rev. Benjamin Coleman, pastor of a church in Boston, his intimate friend and correspondent, preached a sermon on the occasion of the death of Mr. Hollis, before his Excellency the Governor and the General Court, April 1, 1731. The thanks of the council were next day voted to Mr. Coleman, for his sermon "on occasion of the death of Thomas Hollis, Esq. of London, who has merited highly of this government and people, by his

liberal benefactions to Harvard College, for the promoting of learning and religion in this province; and that they desire a copy of the said sermon for the press."

In this vote the House of Representatives concurred, April 2, 1730, and also the Governor, Jonathan Belcher, Esq. The sermon was accordingly published with the title of "The Friend of Christ and his People," and dedicated, "To his Excellency Jonathan Belcher, Esq. Captain General, and Governor-in-Chief, in and over his Majesty's province of the Massachuset's-bay in New England, and to the honourable, his Majesty's Council, and House of Representatives, in General Court assembled."

The stile of this dedication is laboured eulogy, but yet it appears to breathe the generous emotions of a grateful heart. The following is an extract:—

"Know then, that our friend Hollis sleepeth! the virtuous, the pious, the gracious, the generous and munificent friend to our college and the churches of New England! The friend whom Christ inspired, and raised up for us, to do great things for his name and glory; having enriched him to all bountifulness us-ward, to cause through us, thanksgiving to God, not only now, but in all times to come. For, how great are the foundations which it has pleased God, from the enlarged heart, and open hand of this his servant, to lay, for the service of religion and learning in future generations, so long as it shall please the Lord Christ to have his golden candlesticks in these regions of the earth, and to walk in the midst of them! To how many thousands of our money doth the charity and bounty of our excellent friend amount; which of his own mere motion, and even against the restraints of his humble friend now speaking, he freely poured in upon us, from time to time, as a living spring whose waters fail not!

"Again, that which is singular in the piety and benefits of Mr. Hollis unto these churches was, that though he was not strictly of our way, nor in judgment with us in the point of in-

fant baptism, yet his heart and hand were the same to us, as if we had been one in opinion and practice with him. And in this let him stand a teaching pattern and example to us, of a noble Christian, catholic, apostolic spirit and love; which makes those that differ in lesser matters to receive one another to the glory of God, and a shining testimony against a narrow party spirit, which is so much the disgrace and detriment of the protestant interest; and which so early began among the disciples of Jesus, and was rebuked by him, even in John himself, that apostle of love and charity afterward, who once said to Christ in a fret of zeal, *Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.* But, *Jesus said, forbid him not.*

"To the honour of my country, I must add, that it was the account Mr. Hollis received from us, of the free and catholic air we breathe at our Cambridge, where protestants of every denomination may have their children educated, and graduated in our college, if they behave with sobriety and virtue, which took his generous heart, and fixed it on us, and enlarged it to us. And this shall be with me, among his distinguishing praises, while we rise up and bless his memory, i. e. bless God in remembrance of all the undeserved favours done us by him.

"And it were an ungrateful part indeed in us, after so many great benefactions from him, to the interest of learning and religion among us, by the will of God to all posterity, if his death were not mentioned among us, in that solemn and mournful manner as it now is. The weeping widows of Joppa, would else rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us, for they stood mourning about the dead body of Dorcas, a pious disciple, that was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did; and the risen Jesus approved their sorrow, and at the apostle's prayer raised her from the dead; but we mourn a

greater than Dorcas, and have more to shew for our sorrow, than her coats and garments for the poor. Our Hollis has left behind him wardrobes of rich clothing, in many places, both for the souls and bodies of the poor, and some of our sons wear them, in our sight, and others are to put them on, from generation to generation; and if their fathers have dry eyes, we call on our children, and indeed on all the sons of the prophets among us, to weep over Hollis, who clothes you in better than scarlet, with the best of delights, intellectual and moral, and has put on you ornaments of apparel richer than gold! Lament over him therefore with this lamentation:—How is our beauty fallen! How lovely and pleasant to us was he in his life! His love to us was wonderful; and all for Jesus sake."

Another sermon was published by the Rev. Edward Wigglesworth, D. D. Holissian Professor in Divinity, preached in the hall of Harvard College, which enumerates the same facts respecting the munificence of their departed benefactor. The following is an extract:—

"The expressions of his bounty were not confined to a party. And indeed, by his frequent and ample benefactions, for the encouragement of theological as well as human knowledge among us, who are Christians of a different denomination from himself, he hath set such an example of a generous, catholic, and Christian spirit, as hath never before fallen within my observation, nor, so far as I now remember, within my reading. However, it was nothing but what appeared in the constant tenor of his letters, that he did not apprehend *the kingdom of God to consist in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* I hope the shining example he hath set herein, will be an irresistible inducement to those that shall have the government of this society in all times to come, religiously to comply with the very modest reservations he hath made in favour of those of his own denomination among us."

A philosophical discourse by Mr. Isaac Greenwood, M. A. the Hollissian Professor of Philosophy and the Mathematics, was read to the Students in the College, April 7, 1731, in which he extolled the virtues of their deceased founder in turgid and glowing language.

The president of the college, Mr. Benjamin Wadsworth, also prefixed a dedication to the sermon of Dr. Wigglesworth, in which, for the purpose of introducing the splendid gifts of Mr. Thomas Hollis, which he enumerates, he gives the following affecting statement of the origin of Harvard College.

"The using of proper means to promote and propagate right knowledge, must needs be looked on as very beneficial to mankind. Our fathers, who first settled in this wilderness, were well aware of this, and therefore in their early times, though they were few in number, poor, and low in their worldly circumstances, conflicting with many dangers and difficulties, did found a college here, called Harvard College, in Cambridge in New England, to train up youth in good knowledge, learning, and virtue, that thereby they might be the better qualified, eminently to promote the glory of God, and good of men. That God of all grace, and giver of every good gift, who enabled and inclined our fathers to engage in this noble work, has owned and smiled on their pious designs in this matter. He has hitherto continued the college, and made it a *river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God.* That many educated here have been eminently serviceable in promoting both the spiritual and temporal welfare of this people, as well as in some other countries, is too well known to need any proof.

"To the college thus begun in weak and low circumstances, God, of his mere grace, has raised up sundry kind, generous benefactors, some at one time, and some at another; some in doing less, and some more, to promote the noble and pious ends aimed at in founding of it; thanks be to God for his smiles herein. But the late Thomas Hollis, Esq. of London,

merchant, now gone to his everlasting rest, did in his donations to our college, far exceed any other of its benefactors."

It is impossible to read the extracts from these American publications, without noticing how much the ministers appear to be astonished that such princely liberality and noble benevolence should have been manifested towards them by a person of another denomination of Christians; and that person too a Baptist. It was not a century before this when their forefathers imprisoned, fined, punished, and even banished several Christians, for the crime of asserting that infant baptism had neither precept nor precedent for it in the New Testament, and for presuming to baptize those who, the General Court said, had been before baptized! It is probable at that time some might have been living whose fathers had seen good Roger Williams in the depth of a hard winter driven out of the colony, going he knew not whither, nor did they care; when he found that hospitality and friendship among uncivilized Indians, which had been refused him by his countrymen and brethren. It is gratifying to know that the spirit and conduct of Thomas Hollis should have so effectually taught these Massachuset Independents what their forefathers, Messrs. Cotton, &c. might have learned from the founder of Rhode Island Colony, the persecuted Roger Williams, viz. that those who best understand the right of private judgment in religion, will be the most liberal in granting the free exercise of it in others who differ from them. America owes her independence as a nation, and the unrestrained liberty of conscience which her citizens enjoy, to the principles taught by Roger Williams, and the example set them by Thomas Hollis, (both English Baptists,) in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.

Another distinguished person was Mr. John Hollis, brother to the aforesaid Mr. Thomas Hollis. Crosby says, "He possessed the virtues and graces of his family; and if his public charitable benefactions did not amount in sum, he having a

large family to provide for, yet they did in degree, as coming from a soul as truly great and noble as theirs. Three such instances in one and the same family are rare to be found. All truly pious, early converts, and such as *honoured the Lord with their substance.*"

It is not said when he joined the church in Pinners'-hall, nor by whom he was baptized. He is mentioned by Crosby as uniting with his brother in making the public baptistery in Barbican in 1715; and as one of "those gentlemen of the Baptist persuasion who were famous for their piety towards God, and their zeal for the interest of religion in the world."

Mr. Hollis died Jan. 4, 1735-6, and his funeral sermon was also preached by Dr. Hunt, from 1 Pet. i. 24, 25. From this we learn that "the principles of religion, which in his youth were instilled into his mind, soon made a deep impression upon him, and became the incorruptible seed of a spiritual life. His great concern was to keep alive those religious and divine affections. And for that purpose, when business called him to leave the city, and go into the country, he took with him such books as were written with peculiar warmth, and particularly fitted to excite and raise devotion. He was steady and constant in private as well as public worship, and paid ever a due deference to appointments of the Christian doctrine, and recommended them to the observance of others. His beneficence was considerable, and in many instances private, though in public ones it could not be concealed. He had his passions under great regulation, and though he did not talk much, he was pleased with the free and cheerful conversation of others, even to the last. He was careful and exact in the performance of relative duties; a good husband, and a most affectionate father, always giving his children a handsome liberty of conversing with freedom before him, and at the same time ever concerned about their spiritual and eternal welfare. Not to say any thing of the kind usage he expressed to his menial servants, I could enlarge greatly on this

part of his character, were it not that I fear I should raise in his nearest relatives an immoderate grief, which it is their duty to suppress. His patience under his pain was remarkable; and if he had any desire to live longer, it was, that he might be useful to his family and others."

Mr. John Hollis was a draper. He was a manager of the Baptist Fund as early as the year 1724; was also one of the treasurers, and a liberal benefactor, leaving at his death £1100, the interest to be distributed to the poor of several Baptist churches.

There is a sermon also of Dr. Hunt for Mrs. Hannah Hollis, who died Dec. 20, 1724. This is founded upon Ps. ciii. 13, 14. *Like as a father pitieth his children*, &c.

Mr. John Hollis lost an excellent son, named Samuel, at the age of 24, May 24, 1724. Dr. Hunt published a funeral sermon for him, founded upon Eccles. xii. 1—6. *Remember now thy Creator*, &c. "This lovely youth," says Dr. H. "in the dawn of his days, by a sudden and unexpected stroke, is immaturely snatched away: but I must correct myself; he was ripened for the world of spirits."

Having given these memorials of pious worth, which existed among the members of this church whilst it was under the care of evangelical ministers, the writer proceeds to give some farther account of Dr. James Foster.

It was not till after this gentleman had been several years in the ministry, that he embraced the opinions of the Baptists. This change took place while he was a minister at Trowbridge, and in consequence of reading Dr. Gale's reply to Dr. Wall: he was probably baptized by Mr. Joseph Burroughs, of Paul's-alley, Barbican, with whom he afterwards became co-pastor. He was ordained to that office July 1, 1724.

Unhappily for Mr. Foster, and the congregation in Barbican, he had been educated by Mr. Hallet, senior, of Bristol, and was confirmed by the Rev. James Pierce, of Exeter, in the principles of Socinianism. These had been first introduced among the

Baptists in London, by the learned Dr. John Gale, who defended the non-subscribing ministers at the Salters'-hall Conference in 1719.*

The settlement of Mr. Foster at Barbican, and when, twenty years afterwards, he was engaged in the Lord's-day evening lecture at the Old Jewry meeting in the year 1728, afforded him but too great opportunities of propagating the sceptical and unscriptural notions he had imbibed.

Mr. Foster, previously to his joining the Baptists, had published a work entitled, "An Essay on Fundamentals, with a particular regard to the Doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity." This was while he supplied the two congregations at Colesford and Wokey, near Wells; from both which he only received an annual income of fifteen pounds. Subjoined to his Essay on the Trinity is a sermon, entitled, "The Resurrection of Christ proved, and vindicated against the most important Objections of the ancient Jews or modern Deists, and his Disciples shewn to be Witnesses of the Fact."

In the year 1744 Mr. Foster published his works, in four volumes. These contained a variety of subjects, explained according to the Socinian scheme of divinity. In reply to these, that nervous polemical writer, the Rev. John Brine, published, in 1746, an octavo volume of four hundred and six pages, entitled, "A Vindication of some Truths of Natural and Revealed

* Mr. Wilson, in his account of Mr. Foster, when speaking of the proof of his *integrity* and *disinterestedness* in becoming a Baptist, says, "he could entertain but little expectation of meeting with a Baptist church from which his want of orthodoxy would not have excluded him." I suppose there was no congregation at that time among the *Calvinistic Baptists* which would have suffered him to occupy the pulpit the second time: but in Paul's-alley Dr. John Gale "had laboured," and Dr. James Foster "entered into his labours:" here were a people who, by their false notions of candour and catholicism, were "made ready to his hands,"—"a people prepared" for Socinianism.

Religion, in answer to the false Reasonings of Mr. James Foster on various subjects, &c."

Mr. Foster had asserted, "As we cannot in reason, so we are not obliged by revelation, to carry our faith one jot beyond our understanding." "I dare venture to assert," says Mr. Brine, "that if Mr. Foster will not allow that some things must be believed to be true, the nature of which he cannot explain, he will be driven into direct atheism,—that he will unavoidably be compelled to renounce, not only revealed, but natural religion also, and be obliged to embrace the most palpable absurdities. 'Tis not in the least degree dishonourable to our reason to assert, that there are truths, which demand our most religious regard, whose nature far exceeds our comprehension. It cannot be so, if it is rational to believe the existence of a Being who is infinitely above us. Which at present, I suppose, I may take for granted. But how long this will be allowed by some men, I shall not pretend to say." Mr. Brine argues that "the distinction of things *above* and *contrary* to reason is just and true. We profess," says he, "and indeed we do believe things which are above our reason, but we cannot possibly discover that they are in the least contrary to our reason; and therefore we are almost tempted to imagine, that those rational gentlemen, who pronounce our opinions absurd, do not so much exceed us in good sense, as in prejudice, pride, and arrogance."

Mr. Foster never answered, nor even attempted, so far as appears, any reply to Mr. Brine.

In the year 1728, a Wednesday evening lecture was opened for Dr. Foster to supply, and he continued it till nearly the time of his death, when Mr. Charles Bulkeley was chosen to succeed him.

In December 1748, Mr. Foster received from the Marischal College of Aberdeen, the degree of Doctor of Divinity. If this were intended as a mark of distinction for the learning and talents of Mr. Foster, it was well bestowed; but surely Principal

Blackwell, and Professor David Fordyce, who it is said sent him very handsome letters with his diploma, could not have designed to compliment him for his ability as a *teacher* of *divinity*.

There is one good anecdote of Mr. Foster which I with pleasure record. A gentleman, who afterwards took orders in the Church of England, one day called upon him to converse with him upon scepticisms which then oppressed his mind. After the necessary introduction, he began to state his objections, when the Doctor with great gravity, stopped him with this question: "Have you asked a solution of your difficulties from God this morning? Have you prayed to the fountain of all light for instruction?" Upon receiving an answer in the negative, he rejoined, "Sir, you will excuse my gratifying your curiosity upon the subject of revelation, while you are chargeable with the breach of one of the first duties of natural religion."

Among those whom Mr. Foster baptized, was one person of distinguished and eccentric character, Mr. Matthew Whiston, who became a member of the church under his care.

Mr. Foster was charged with deism and infidelity: this he repelled by saying, "I take this opportunity to declare in an age in which scepticism prevails to an high degree, that I esteem it an honour to be a firm believer; and, from devotedness of mind, a teacher and public advocate for the Christian institution, and think all those justly chargeable with great baseness, pusillanimity, and hypocrisy, who either preach, or profess it, for the sake of popularity, or any worldly consideration whatsoever, without being themselves real and hearty Christians."

Without suspecting Mr. Foster's integrity, or charging him with not believing what he preached to be true, we may yet question whether he was a "firm believer" in the doctrines of *revealed religion*; or "a real and hearty Christian," if that term necessarily imports a follower or imitator of the Lord Jesus Christ. Can that man be a genuine disciple of Christ who rejects the doctrine of the death of Christ as a real sacri-

fice for sin, and who denies the influences of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification? Mr. Foster exalted human reason to the supreme rank, making her the sole umpire in religion; and therefore he rejected all those doctrines of divine revelation which could not have been discovered even by the reason of Adam before his transgression, much less by that of his depraved descendants. There is certainly good reason to conclude, from several circumstances in the life of this gentleman, that he was an *honest dissenter*, and an *upright man* in avowing his sentiments; but then those sentiments were subversive of the gospel of Christ: and therefore Mr. Foster, with all his "charity," and his "correct deportment in civil, social, and religious life," was not such a Christian as the apostle John would have received into his house, bidding him *God speed.* 2 John 10.

Mr. Foster died Nov. 5, 1753, and was interred in Bunhill-fields. Funeral sermons were preached on account of his death by Dr. Caleb Fleming, at Pinners'-hall, from Acts xi. 23, 24; and by Mr. Charles Bulkley, at the lecture in the Old Jewry, on John v. 35.

A handsome monument was erected over his tomb, which has been suffered to go to decay. The following is the inscription:—

Here lie the remains of
JAMES FOSTER, D.D.
Born at Exeter, in Devonshire, 16th of September, 1697.
Early trained up to academical studies,
And prepared to the sacred work, to which
he devoted himself
by diligent researches into the holy Scriptures,
and the assistance they afford as a guide to
natural reason:
As also by serious piety, elevated thought,
Happy facility in composing, and fluency of
expressions:
His judgment in divine things not guided by
the opinion of others,

Produced many discourses and writings out of the common way,
Some in defence of the divine religion,
But most in recommending love towards God
and men.
Notwithstanding the censures which fell upon him,
He was candid towards all whom he believed
sincere,
Beneficent to the neglect of himself,
Agreeable and useful in conversation,
And careful to avoid even the appearance of evil.
He began his ministry in the west country
Under great discouragements,
Was ordained pastor in July, 1724, at
Barbican, in London,
And after twenty years service there,
Removed to Pinners'-hall, in the same city.
In December, 1748, the University of Aberdeen, in Scotland,
Conferred on him, unsought, the degree of D. D.
His eloquence procured him many hearers of
different persuasions,
Till at length, by his great assiduity in preaching and writing,*
He sunk into a nervous disorder,
Which, increasing upon him for two or three years,
Put an end to his life, 5th of November, 1753,
In the 57th year of his age."

Dr. Caleb Fleming succeeded Dr. Foster at Pinners'-hall; and at his death, in 1779, the congregation, which had existed

* Besides the Works already mentioned, he published the following; The Usefulness, Truth, and Excellency of the Christian Revelation, defended against the Objections in a late Book, entitled, "Christianity as old as the Creation," 1731. A volume of Sermons on interesting subjects, 1734. This was reprinted with three additional volumes, in 1744. Three pamphlets on the subject of Heresy: a Controversy with Dr. Henry Stebbing, one of the King's Chaplains, and Preacher to the Society in Gray's Inn, 1735, 1736, 1737. An Account of the Behaviour of the late Earl of Kilmarnock, after the sentence, and on the day of his execution, 1746. Discourses on all the principal Branches of Natural Religion and Social Virtue, 1749: a second volume in 1752.

probably a hundred and fifty years, became extinct. Little could the excellent Andrew Palmer, and George Fownes, have thought that they would be ultimately succeeded by such persons as Dr. Foster and Dr. Fleming; but had they foreseen it, they would doubtless have predicted that destruction of the congregation which took place; and which, on account of the errors it had received, they would not have lamented.

Sabbatarian Baptist Church, Pinners'-hall.

This was the church founded by the laborious and learned Rev. Francis Bampfield, M. A. He had been ejected from Sherborne for his nonconformity. A large account is given of him in vol. ii. p. 476. He died a martyr to his principles in Newgate, Feb. 16, 1684, just before Mr. Ralphson, and Mr. Thomas Delaune, the famous nonconformist writer. The deaths of the two former of these were improved in a sermon by Mr. Hercules Collins, published in London, 1684, entitled, "Counsel for the Living, occasioned by the Dead; or a Discourse on Job iii. 17, 18, arising from the Deaths of Mr. Francis Bampfield, and Mr. Zachariah Ralphson. By Hercules Collins, *their fellow-prisoner* in Newgate." The following texts are on the title page:—

The Lord looseth the prisoners, Ps. xlvi. 7. *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints,* Ps. cxvi. 15. *And hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles, for the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed,* 2 Tim. i. 10, 11.

Mr. Edward Stennett succeeded after the church was again collected in 1684; and though he continued to reside at Wallingford, he yet supplied them occasionally until his son Joseph (one of the brightest ornaments of society which our

denomination has produced) was settled over them as their pastor, March 4, 1690. At his ordination a day of fasting and prayer was observed: Mr. John Belcher, sen. Mr. Hansard Knollys, and Mr. Isaac Lamb, were engaged in this solemn service. Mr. Belcher and Mr. Knollys delivered appropriate exhortations, and Mr. Lamb preached on Matthew ix. 38;—*Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest,* &c. It is added, "The former assented and consented thereto, and the latter pronounced the words of ordination. They all spent some time in prayer, and proceeded to ordination with imposition of hands."*

Mr. Stennett continued with this church till his death, in 1713. At one part of the time he was an assistant on the Lord's day to Mr. Richard Allen, in Barbican, which will be noticed in its appropriate place. A large account of this eminent minister has been given in the two former volumes.

In the year 1713 a third edition of the hymns of this worthy minister, "in commemoration of the Lord's Supper," was published. This was recommended by the following London ministers;—Messrs. Joseph Maisters, Benjamin Stinton, Richard Allen, John Piggott, Nathaniel Hodges, and Ebenezer Wilson.

In the time of Mr. Joseph Stennett, another Sabbatarian church, which had been under the care of Mr. John Belcher, a Sabbatarian Baptist, and Mr. Henry Cook, who succeeded him,

* At this time Mr. Joseph Stennett did not belong to the Calvinistic or Particular Baptists, neither did he connect himself with the Arminian or General Baptists; but belonged to those Baptist churches which were founded upon the six principles mentioned in Heb. vi. 1, 2. There were several of the pastors in London at that period, who would not be designated in any other way than as such who "professed and practised the six principles of the Christian religion." This distinction will account for many mistakes which have been made by the author of the History of the General Baptists, respecting persons whom he has tenaciously claimed as having belonged to that denomination.

united with the church at Pinners'-hall. Mr. Belcher died March 1695, and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Stennett.

The Sabbatarian church at this place, after the death of Mr. Stennett, in 1713, was without a minister until 1727; and during this long interval they were supplied by Baptist ministers. Mr. Edmund Townsend was chosen pastor, and ordained on the third of December, 1727; or, as the records express it, "the church gave themselves up to Mr. Edmund Townsend." He was a worthy and respectable man; and though not particularly distinguished for literary attainments, was yet a useful minister, and greatly esteemed in his day. He died Jan. 5, 1763, having been for some time before rendered incapable of preaching. His remains were interred in the burial-ground behind the Baptist meeting-house in Mill-yard, where he had buried his wife a few years before. She appears to have died in the year 1755, in the sixty-eighth year of her age: but the inscription on the stone is scarcely legible. It is not known whether this Mr. Townsend was descended from a Mr. John Townsend, a minister in London among the particular Baptists, the father of Mr. Meredith Townsend, who changed his sentiments, and became a minister of the Independent denomination.

The church continued at Pinners'-hall till 1727, when they removed to Curriers'-hall; and in 1799 they removed for a few years to Red-cross-street, and now meet at Devonshire-square meeting, under the pastorate of the learned Rev. Richard Burnside. The church is reduced to about six members, and the congregation is not much more numerous.

Lord's-day Morning Lecture at Pinners'-hall.

The earliest account I have seen of this lecture relates to 1689. On July 7, in that year when Mr. Thomas Harrison

was called to succeed Dr. Nehemiah Coxe at Petty France, it is said he informed Mr. William Collins, the pastor, and Mr. Collet, one of the deacons, that "he was willing to serve the congregation, if they would allow him to keep up his lecture at Pinners'-hall, which was consented to by the congregation."

Mr. Elias Keach preached "four sermons on Justification," at the morning lecture at Pinners'-hall, where it is supposed he had often fifteen hundred hearers. As it is said Mr. Keach often preached here between the years 1693 and 1701, it is probable the lecture was supplied by different Baptist ministers.

I find that Mr. John Weatherly, mentioned page 344, preached at Pinners'-hall on one part of the Lord's day. At his death May 31, 1752, Mr. Joseph Burroughs preached his funeral sermon, founded upon 1 Cor. xv. 57.

He was succeeded at Pinners'-hall by Mr. Richard Barron, who was ordained to the pastoral office March 22, 1753. Mr. Joseph Burroughs preached on the occasion, and published his discourse, entitled, "The duty and reward of a faithful Pastor, founded upon 1 Pet. v. 1—4." He was pastor of a church at Deptford in 1749.

Dr. Joseph Jeffries was a minister also of the General Baptist church in Pinners'-hall. He has been mentioned page 344.

Before we take our leave of this place, we shall introduce a remark of Judge Blackstone, (Comment. vol. iv. p. 54,) in relation to an incident alluded to in a note, page 377 of this work. "Sir Humphry Edwin, a Lord Mayor of London, had the imprudence, soon after the Toleration Act, to go to a Presbyterian meeting-house in his formalities; which is alluded to by Dean Swift, in his 'Tale of a Tub,' under the allegory of Jack getting on a great horse, and eating custard." This celebrated commentator on the laws of England forgot to mention that the episcopalians soon after, by procuring the Occasional

Conformity Bill, made the Presbyterians pay very dearly for one of their body having taken a liking to custard!

CHURCH AT GOAT STREET, HORSELYDOWN, SOUTHWARK.

THE meeting-house in which Mr. Benjamin Keach preached, was situated in Goat-street, near St. John's church. It was a wooden building, and stood at the north-west corner of Goat-yard-passage, now called Goat-street. The front door came into a short cross street from Horselydown Back-street, to Free-school-street. The meeting-house was enclosed by a brick wall in front, with a court-yard, and lime trees on each side of the path leading to the principal door. It is a still and quiet part of Southwark, very few carriages passing that way.*

It appears that Mr. Keach had laboured in Goat-steet, when Mr. William Rider† was the pastor, about twenty years before he accepted the pastoral office: this probably arose from the unsettled state of the congregation, and from the frequent interruptions they experienced from the violence of their persecutors. In 1688 he was solemnly ordained as the pastor, by the imposition of the hands of elders of other churches. After this, through the blessing of God upon his ministry, they

* My friend Mr. Benjamin Coxhead, sen. a member of the church in Carter-lane, from whom I had the above information, says, "I am one of the few that are living who remember the meeting-house. I have been in it several times when it was used a cooperage. Part of the ground on which the meeting-house stood is now occupied by Mr. Heighton, as a blacksmith's shop, and I believe a part of the old building is still standing."

† Mr. William Rider, Mr. Keach's predecessor, is mentioned by Mr. Danvers, in his "Treatise of Baptism," as practising laying on of hands after baptism, and as having defended it by writing on the subject.

quickly increased to a very considerable number; and had frequent occasion to enlarge their place of worship, so that it was at last capable of containing nearly a thousand people. This is said to have been the first church, among the Baptists, which practised singing in public worship. For twenty years it was attended to only at the Lord's Supper, and it was not introduced into the worship generally, without much difficulty, nor even without producing a separation in the church.

In the year 1697 Mr. Keach published, "The Articles of the Faith of the Church of Christ, or congregation meeting at Horselydown, Benjamin Keach, pastor, as asserted this 10th of 5th month 1697." This is dedicated, "To the congregation with whom I am an unworthy member, (and the unworthy overseer,) who are in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ; grace, mercy, and peace, be multiplied. Most dear and beloved in Christ. I hope I can say (with the holy apostle) that you are by me dearly beloved, *my joy, and my crown;* yea, you are my honour, in whom I will rejoice, being the ornament of my poor ministry, by which the most of you have (through the blessing of God) been converted to Jesus Christ: and if you stand fast in the faith in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel, and do adorn your profession, living in love and endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, you will cause my latter days to be most sweet and comfortable to me, after all those troubles, sorrows, and reproaches I have met with, both from within and without. Evident it is God had most marvellously appeared to strengthen your hands; *though the archers have sorely grieved you and shot at you,* yet your bow abideth in strength; and that the arms of your hands may still abide strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, shall be my continual prayer."

One reason assigned by Mr. Keach for publishing this small work is thus expressed: "Though you agree in general with all other churches of the same faith, in all those articles there in-

serted, yet, therein your whole faith is not comprehended, viz. that of imposition of hands upon baptized believers as such, and singing God's praise, &c. because some of our churches dissent from us therein; yet my desire is you would nevertheless shew all tenderness, charity, and moderation towards those who differ from you in those cases, and not refuse communion with them," &c.

These articles are signed by Benjamin Keach, pastor; Benjamin Stinton, teacher; John Roberts, Edward Foley, Joshua Farrow, Thomas Stinton, John Valley, Isaac Ballard, deacons; and forty-two men members. To the thirty-nine articles are added a postscript explaining the sense in which they understood what is said, (speaking of a person actually and personally justified) that "his sins past, present, and to come, are all forgiven." It is dated "From my house in Freeman's-lane, by Horselydown; Southwark, Aug. 16, 1697."

There is a large account of Mr. Keach in the former volumes of this history. The books which he published amounted to forty-three. Of these writings respectful notice is taken in a work which is not remarkable for its liberality, especially towards the Baptists. "His two most celebrated pieces are his Tropologia, or a key to open Scripture metaphors, in two volumes folio, published in 1692, and his Gospel Mysteries unveiled, or an Exposition of all the Parables, folio, published 1704. Both are books for which the Christian world are under great obligations to the author. He has, indeed, heaped together every thing he could collect; and it requires judgment in the reader to separate what is good, from what is fanciful and strained, and not to the purpose. But still we are very much indebted to Mr. Keach, for doing so fully and so well, on both topics, what no Englishman had done before. On the Continent tropology had been studied with the most assiduous attention; and some valuable treatises had been written on the subject, but none had so successfully cultivated it at

home. To the honour of Mr. Keach, and as the strongest proof of their value, both these performances are still in request, and continue to be sold at a high price to the present day."*

Mr. Keach died July 18, 1704, and was succeeded by Mr. Benjamin Stinton, who had married one of his daughters. His excellent father-in-law, knowing his abilities as a minister, and believing that the church would fix on him as his successor, charged him on his death bed, not to refuse their call if they should think fit to make choice of him; adding, with great earnestness, that if he did not accept it, he would reject the call of God, and could not expect the divine blessing to attend him. It was with great difficulty that the church prevailed upon him, but the dying words of Mr. Keach, and the pressing earnestness of the church, at length led him to consent.

Mr. Stinton was born February 2, 1676. He was about thirty years of age when he settled as pastor of this church. He proved a very judicious and laborious minister of the gospel. He had not the advantage of an academical education for the ministry, yet by vigorous application under the tuition of the famous Mr. Ainsworth, after he had commenced the ministerial employment, he acquired a good degree of knowledge in the languages, and other useful parts of literature, which added lustre to his natural endowments which were very perspicuous.

His usefulness in establishing the Maze-pond school has been already noticed. He was also very instrumental, if not the first mover, in establishing the Baptist Fund, though he strongly disapproved of one of its regulations: viz. "That it should be for the use and advantage of those churches only, who go under the denomination of Particular Baptists;" and he accordingly entered his protest against it.

* History of Dissenters by the Rev. David Bogue and the Rev. James Bennett, in four volumes. Vol. ii. p. 267.

Mr. Stinton appears to have enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the public in a high degree; and he was thus enabled to render many acts of kindness to persons in distressed circumstances. His prudent conduct and complaisant behaviour, procured for him the respect of many persons who had no good will towards Dissenters in general. It is said, he was of a truly catholic spirit, and much frequented the company of ministers of other denominations, though he adhered firmly to his peculiar principles, and was zealous in defending them. He always endeavoured to cultivate harmony among Christians of different sentiments, being far from making those principles of religion which he disapproved, a reason for treating their persons with indifference or contempt. He was a consistent Calvinist; stearing clear of Arminianism on the one hand, and Antinomianism on the other.

His death was very sudden and unexpected to his friends, having been with several of them in the city the day before. He was taken ill in the evening, and was in great pain during the night, but was somewhat relieved in the morning. But to the great surprise of Mrs. Stinton, he lay down upon his pillow and said, "I am going," and died immediately, Feb. 11, 1718, in the forty-third year of his age.

He was buried in the Baptists' burying ground, Deadmans'-place, in the park, Southwark.* The Rev. David Rees of Wapping, who was to have preached his funeral sermon, was prevented by illness. It was therefore preached by the Rev. Thomas Harrison of Little Wild-street, at Mr. Killinghall's meet-

* The entrance to this burying-ground was in Queen-street; Mr. Benjamin Coxhead has a drawing of it: the large elegant door-case was of Portland stone, and in the year 1817 was in good preservation. Queen-street is now called Union-street; and the spot where the burying-ground was is in the centre of Little Guildford-street, Peter-street, White Cross-street, and Union-street.

ing-house in Deadmans'-place. After Mr. Rees was recovered he preached the sermon he had prepared, at the meeting-house in Horselydown, before a numerous assembly. The text was the concluding sentence of a funeral sermon, which Mr. Stinton had preached on the Lord's day preceding his death; "Be ye also ready." Neither of the funeral sermons were published: but Mr. Thomas Harrison, in a volume of poems on divine subjects, added one, "To the memory of Mr. Stinton," in which he speaks of him, and Mr. John Maisters lately deceased, as "the two chief pillars of the Baptist interest, laid on the ground."

Mr. Stinton published "A Sermon preached at Little Wild-street, Nov. 27, 1713, in commemoration of the great and dreadful storm, in Nov. 1703." This is said to have been published "at the desire of several gentlemen who annually observe that day. Third edition, 1714." He published also a sermon entitled, "Of Divine Providence; occasioned by the demise of her late Majesty Queen Anne, and the happy accession of our present Sovereign King George to the throne of Great Britain. Second edition, 1714."

As a specimen of Mr. Stinton's sentiments and manner of preaching, the following brief extract is made from this sermon. When speaking of the obligations Christians were under to praise God, he says, "The principal mercy of all, (viz. our redemption,) is also from him; it is he who in infinite goodness hath pitied us in our lost and miserable condition, who hath provided a remedy for our malady, and seasonably applies it for our recovery. Our deliverance from the bondage of sin, from the tyranny of Satan, and from the jaws of eternal death, and our title to life everlasting, are all owing to his rich mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. If he had not graciously interposed between us and ruin, we had sunk irrevocably into endless misery, and perished in our iniquities, and had become the prey of the devil and the triumph of hell. But oh,

goodness truly divine! He hath laid help upon one that is mighty and able to save in our forlorn state, when helpless and hopeless. *He raised up for us an horn of salvation, in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of all his holy prophets, that by him we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of them that hate us,* Luke i. 69. Now for a mercy so incomparably great, for a mercy so absolutely necessary, so universally desirable, and every way so suitable to perfect our happiness, and which we are utterly unworthy of, how great and how universal are our obligations!"

He left in manuscript a small piece, entitled, "A short Catechism, wherein the Principles of the Christian Religion are taught in the words of the Sacred Scriptures themselves." This was repeatedly printed, but is now unknown.

He had been for some years collecting materials to write a history of the English Baptists, from the beginning of Christianity to that time. He had arranged the introduction, giving an account of the different opinions entertained of the origin of the Baptists. This was published after his death, by Crosby, in the preface to his first volume. He had designed to conclude his projected history with an abridgment of the controversy between the Baptists and Pædobaptists, and a catalogue of the books that had been published upon the subject since the Reformation in England. But his sudden and premature death prevented the accomplishment of this design.

The manuscript of Mr. Stinton was used by Mr. David Rees in his excellent piece on Baptism. Crosby gives this account of it:—"It is now many years since the materials, of which a great part of the treatise is formed, came into my hands. Had the ingenious collector of them lived to digest them in their proper order, according to his design, they would have appeared to much greater advantage." The only part of the work Mr. Stinton had completed, was what he had prepared for the introduction, containing the opinions of ancient writers on the subject of baptism.

At the request of Mr. Edward Wallin, and Mr. William Arnold, Mr. Crosby sent Mr. Stinton's materials to Mr. Neal, when he was preparing his celebrated history, thinking he would include the history of the Baptists under that of the general term of Puritans. After keeping the manuscripts several years, the whole of what he said of them was comprized in less than five pages of his third volume. It was this circumstance, and the unkind reflections upon the few Baptist ministers whose names he condescended to notice, that furnished the reasons why Mr. Crosby published his "History of the Baptists." Some idea of Mr. Neal's want of impartiality might be formed from the circumstance of his having found no room among the Puritans for such men as Cheare, Bunyan, Gifford, Keach, Kiffin, and Stennett; men who suffered more for the principles of nonconformity in the reigns of Charles and James, than any others of the puritan ministers, whether Presbyterians or Independents.

At the death of Mr. Stinton, the church in Goat-street divided in choosing a successor. One part ultimately fixed themselves in Unicorn-yard, and the other in Carter-lane. As both these churches used the place in Goat-street, the writer, whose only business is to state facts, proceeds to give their history in the order in which they succeeded in the occupancy of the old meeting-house.

CHURCH IN UNICORN-YARD.

This church was composed of part of the congregation of Mr. Benjamin Keach, as already related. At the death of Mr. Benjamin Stinton a dispute arose about choosing a successor in the pastoral office. Some of the people called Mr. John Gill to that office; while others, and those some of the most

respectable for age, for office, and for property, were dissatisfied with, and protested against the manner in which the election was conducted; objecting also to the majority as being on the side of Mr. Gill, from its never having been the practice of the females to vote.

This matter of dispute was referred by both parties to the society of ministers; and the most impartial way of giving the history will be to copy the letter sent by the ministers, as they were desirous, if possible, to prevent the expected separation. They say,

"The ministers met together at the Hanover Coffee-house, Oct. 8, 1719, from what has appeared before them, are of opinion, that in the previous question put to the church in Horselydown on the eleventh of September last, 'Whether to proceed at that time to the choice of a pastor or not,' the majority of the brethren were against proceeding at that time. And they likewise are of opinion that it is of the nature of the previous question determined by the majority of the brethren, for deferring the election of a pastor to some future opportunity for trial, that there ought to be such opportunities given to Mr. Gill to exercise his ministry in the church. And accordingly do advise that Mr. Gill may preach in Horselydown as probationer one part of the day so long as the church shall think fit, and that they who dissented from the choice of Mr. Gill do make provision for the other part of the day.

Signed in the name of the rest,

Oct. 8, 1719. EDWARD WALLIN, Moderator."

Those who objected to Mr. Gill say, "When we had received this advice, we by all due means persuaded Mr. Gill and his adherents to return, and conform themselves hereto, as we were resolved to do; but they refused. That nothing might be wanting on our part to preserve the peace of the church,

we by the following writing declared our minds:—'Whereas our brethren adhering to Mr. Gill have not conformed themselves to the advice of the ministers; and that we may do all we can to restore peace and unity, and give them yet further proof of our sincere desire to preserve the peace of the church; we declare that if Mr. Gill, and those who adhere to him, will conform themselves to the advice of the ministers as aforesaid, we are willing on our parts, if they will do the same, to declare under our hands, that if after hearing Mr. Gill, or any other candidate or candidates, the majority of votes shall fall on Mr. Gill, or any other candidate, we will endeavour to keep our communion with the church, though we should not be entirely satisfied; but if it should happen that any of us should not be entirely satisfied, we will peaceably withdraw, and not endeavour to set up a separate meeting on any pretence whatever.' But this proposal, as all our other endeavours, proved unsuccessful; nothing would satisfy, unless we could receive Mr. Gill as pastor of the church, which we would by no means do."

The following is said in their records to have been the state of the case respecting the members who remained at Goat-street, and those who left it with Mr. Gill.*

Remained, 122 members, including six deacons, viz. John Valley, John Seamor, James Brouse, Abraham Atkins, John Yorke, Josiah Keene. Removed with Mr. Gill, 99 members, twenty-four men and seventy-five women; including one deacon, Mr. Thomas Crosby. Mr. Gill's friends now proposed two questions to the people in Goat-street. 1. "Whether they were willing to come to a scrutiny, to see where the majority was

* Mr. Gill and his friends had withdrawn themselves from the place in Goat-street, and had conducted worship in the school-room of Mr. Thomas Crosby, afterwards the author of the History of the English Baptists.

on the day of election? 2. Whether if they were not willing to do so, they could not agree to dismiss each other?"—The people in Goat-street abode by their former proposals, and proceeded to choose Mr. William Arnold as their pastor. They continued in Goat-street till the expiration of the lease at midsummer 1720, and then gave it up to Mr. Gill and his friends, agreeing to take ten pounds of them for the pews which they had erected.

In May 1723, the following persons who had separated with Mr. Gill, desired permission to return to their former communion, viz. Thomas Crosby, Elizabeth Stinton, Susan Keach, Rachel Carter, Rebecca Crosby, Benjamin Stinton, Susan Stinton, and Elizabeth Fisher.

It is not easy to settle the question which of these parties should be considered as the church. The people who afterwards chose Mr. Arnold said, that the decision was come to respecting Mr. Gill, after a majority had determined to defer the consideration of the question: those who chose Mr. Gill said, that a majority had decided the election, and they were willing to submit to a scrutiny, which was not agreed to. Mr. Gill's friends, therefore, formed themselves into a church state, March 2, 1719-20; the records of the other part remarking, "N. B. They were never dismissed from us."

The new meeting-house which had been erected in Unicorn-yard, was opened for public worship Jan. 26, 1720.—Mr. Jeremiah Owen, an aged Independent minister who had been recently baptized, preached in the morning, and the Rev. Thomas Harrison, of Little Wild-street, in the afternoon.

This meeting-house, though not very large, is a good convenient building, with three galleries and a commodious vestry: it will contain about five hundred persons.

The church in Goat-street had sent three members to

the Baptist fund from its commencement, and this part of it while it continued in Goat-street, immediately introduced Mr. Arnold as their pastor: their collection for the first year after their separation was sixteen pounds.

Mr. William Arnold was born in the West of England, in 1681; and it appears he was called by grace about the time of his marriage, when a change in his heart and conversation was wrought, surprising to himself and all about him. Being noticed as a man of uncommon seriousness, spirituality, and affection, especially in the discharge of the duty of prayer, for which he was very eminent, "the church," as it is expressed, "solicited a taste of his gift in expounding the Scriptures." This was a matter which, in his opinion, was so weighty, and of such moment and importance, that he spent a great deal of time in seeking counsel from God; and in advising with ministers, especially with that eminent minister, Mr. Davison, of Trowbridge. From their encouraging him to undertake the work, after having carefully examined him in his knowledge and experience, and the repeated importunities of the church, he at last, with some degree of resolution, though with much fear and trembling, engaged to go out in the strength of the Lord to publish the glad tidings of salvation. He had not long been thus engaged, before God gave him some remarkable seals to his ministry, which greatly strengthened his faith, and encouraged him to proceed. He now gave himself wholly to reading, study, meditation, and prayer; nor was it in vain, for his profiting appeared unto all, and he soon became a very great favourite with all the churches among whom he was called to minister.

It was these eminent qualifications which recommended him to the notice of the destitute congregation in Goat-street. That part of the church which invited him to the pastoral office were very hearty and unanimous in their choice; but he con-

sidered the office so very responsible, that he took several months to consider it before he complied with their request, nor did he engage in it without having obtained the opinion and encouragement of the ministers in London. He was ordained Nov. 15, 1720, when the Rev. David Rees, of Limehouse, began the service by prayer, Mr. Thomas Harrison gave him the charge, Mr. Joseph Burroughs preached to the church, and Mr. Benjamin Wallin concluded in prayer. There were present Mr. Galloway and Mr. Matthews, Presbyterian ministers, Messrs. Kinch, Mulliner, Beddome, Kimber, Slater, and Benwick. The church at this period consisted of a hundred and twenty-two members.

Mr. Arnold appears to have been a very respectable and useful minister for about twelve years. In addition to supplying his own congregation, he preached in the evening lectures of Horselydown, Silver-street, and Devonshire-square.

For about two years before his death he was greatly interrupted in his ministerial work by bodily indisposition. It was thought that the death of Mr. Edward Wallin, his very intimate friend, in 1733, so much afflicted him, that he was never well afterwards.

"The Monday before he died, on May 17, 1734, he asked his physicians with his usual cheerfulness, what they thought of him. When they told him there was danger in his case, they were no sooner withdrawn, but he said to his friends, with his hands lifted up to heaven, and with an air of pleasure and satisfaction in his countenance, 'Now I am going, I am going home, I am going to glory.' Upon this he sent for his children, took a solemn and affectionate leave of them, and with the authority of a minister, and the affection of a parent, recommended to them their duty to God, to one another, and how they ought to walk in the world.

"Tuesday being appointed by the church as a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, on his account, he sent them the

following message, which he spoke with the utmost zeal and most melting affection, though he was so weak as to be supported by two persons, whilst he delivered it.

"'I desire,' said he to an officer of the church, then present, 'you will be a mouth for me, this day to the church: give my love to them as a fellow-member, as a minister of Christ, and as their pastor. Tell them that I am now going *to my God, and their God; to my Father, and to their Father:* I desire them all to join in praises to God, for the exceeding abundant riches of his grace and mercy to me. These words, *Thy sins, which are many and great, are forgiven,* they have been set home upon my soul, with such power and joy which almost overset the tabernacle; they were words once to me, as life from death, and now they are life in death. I am concerned for that little hill in mount Sion. Some of them, I believe, are seals to my ministry, and will be my joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ. They have long been a creditable and reputable church; they are now so; and it is my desire they may continue in credit and reputation after my decease. I now take my farewell of them, and commit them to the care of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. Let them wait on God, that he may give them a pastor after his own heart, to feed them with knowledge and understanding. I desire them to shew their love and value for me, by uniting in love and affection one to another; and by filling up their places in the church, prove that they gave not up themselves to a minister, but to the Lord, and to one another. I desire them to walk closely together in holy communion and fellowship with God and one another; and then they may expect to meet death with joy and comfort, as I now do. And so I take my leave of them, expecting to see them in a little time; and that we shall be companions again together, and be for ever with the Lord.'

"After this, when he had bid his last adieu, in a very solemn manner, to many of his friends, and several brethren in the

ministry, he said, in the close of that day, 'Now my work is done:' and desired to see no more company.

"Wednesday he was in the same frame of spirit, rejoicing in the Lord, and longing for his dissolution.

"Thursday evening, being asked whether his comfort continued, he answered, with his hands lifted up, 'Yes, without the least cloud; Satan has not been suffered to interrupt it.'

"Friday morning, the morning on which he entered into glory, about an hour before he died, he said to some friends, 'You will be asked by the world, how I went off; you are my witnesses, that I declare with my dying breath, that my firm faith and dependance is on the blood, righteousness, and satisfaction of the Lord Jesus Christ, for my acceptance in the sight of God.' After this, thanking them for all their kindness, he wished, in the most affectionate manner, that *his God might be their God*, and that they might be eternal companions with him in glory. One of them perceiving the near approach of death, said, 'Sir, you seem to be very low;' he answered with a kind of rapture, 'Low! no, I am mounting up as fast as I can.' Upon her saying, 'Sir, do you feel any pain?' He answered, 'No, I bless the Lord I feel no pain; he has made my passage easy.' Some of his last words were, 'I am an instance of sovereign and distinguished grace, *a brand plucked out of the burning*.' A few minutes after this he fell sweetly asleep in Jesus, and died without sigh, groan, or complaint.

Mr. Arnold was interred in the burying ground behind the Meeting. Mr. Samuel Wilson delivered the address at the grave, and on Lord's day following, May 26, he preached a funeral sermon, founded on Luke vii. 47. *Her sins which are many are forgiven her.* This passage, the preacher observes, was the last seal which the Spirit of adoption affixed to the soul of the deceased, before it broke the prison of clay, and entered on the work and happiness of heaven.

As to his public ministry it appears he had been a faithful servant of Christ. Appealing to the congregation, Mr. Wilson thus speaks of him: "How he has fulfilled his ministry among you, you are the best judges; and I believe he has a testimony in every one of you, that with the utmost diligence, seriousness, affection, and faithfulness, he has declared to you the whole counsel of God. The more substantial and soul-edifying truths of the gospel, were the subjects he wholly insisted on. Saints and sinners, babes and fathers in Christ, Sion's mourners, the poor, the afflicted, the tempted, and distressed, the young and the aged, every one in the family had his portion: nor was he satisfied with pleasing the ear, but laboured in the strength of the Lord, to speak to the heart and conscience; and it was with that spirituality and savour, as abundantly discovered that he tasted and handled of the word of life in his own soul, whilst he held it forth to others.

"His method was easy, just, and natural; his diction strong and masculine, yet plain and familiar; his gesture and deportment graceful and becoming. He well knew how to clothe his words with authority, when as a son of thunder, he had to deal with the stupid conscience of a rebellious sinner; nor was he at a loss in discovering the greatest tenderness, sympathy, compassion, and affection, when, as a son of consolation, he was sent with the message of peace to the humble penitent believer, of a broken heart, and a contrite spirit; and as he was richly furnished with gifts and graces, which rendered him an able minister, so the work of God prospered in his hands. Many converts were gathered in, who dated their first serious impressions to a blessing of God upon his labours. The saints found him under a divine agency to be a helper of their faith, joy, and consolation."

In speaking of his Christian character, Mr. Wilson says, "I might say much of his natural abilities; and I believe every one that knew him will allow, that for a ready discerning of

men and things, a lively imagination, a solid judgment, a strong and tenacious memory, he had few his equals. And as he has often expressed how thankful he should have been (so far was he from slighting or despising a regular education) could he have read the sacred oracles in the original languages, so Providence seemed, in a great measure, to make up this defect, by blessing him with an industrious spirit. He thought no pains too much in reading the best English divines, and consulting the most judicious commentators, to come to the sense of the Holy Ghost, in passages more difficult and obscure: and in this he was so successful, that men of the greatest capacity, and the most improved literature, often attended his ministry with pleasure and advantage. He was indeed a skilful workman, who needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

"His natural disposition was good, his conversation most agreeable; an innocent cheerfulness, attended with proper prudence, discovered itself upon almost every occasion; so that he had as many friends as acquaintance, nor could you be in his company long, without improvement and delight.

"In his family he was a tender husband, and most affectionate father, conscientious and constant in the discharge of relative duties. In the world few more inoffensive; courteous to all, ready to do good offices even to strangers, faithful and sedulous in the service of his friends; and some have thought as a second cause, that the last great breach upon his constitution, was owing to his zeal and application for the prosperity of one whom he loved as a brother."

In fulfilling the duties of his office in presiding at the church-meetings it is said, "He knew how to keep his place without lording it over God's heritage; and few ministers were more zealous in preserving the purity and maintaining the discipline of the church."

The enjoyments which he had of divine things led him often to express great concern for the Deists, who deny a divine revelation; because, he said, They must be wholly destitute of any degree of that sweet consolation which he had received from the promises contained in the word of God: particularly he mentioned these words, *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,* as the great support of his dying hours.

Mr. Arnold left a family of fatherless children: in addressing these, Mr. Wilson, with much feeling said, "My soul grieves with you, and for you; you have lost the best of fathers; but there is a Father in heaven who made him that kind affectionate parent he was to you, and who only can make up your loss: think over his dying words, and be much in seeking that God, who has promised to be a father to the fatherless."

Mr. Crosby, who knew him intimately, says of him, "It may be justly said of Mr. Arnold, according to the wisdom of this world, that he was a man of no learning. But when delivering himself from the pulpit, such was the correctness of his discourses, that they were not inferior to the most learned of his brethren: he appeared to be a solid and able divine."

After Mr. Arnold's death, the church invited Mr. Hugh Evans, of Bristol; he preached for a short time upon probation, but as the congregation of Broadmead were unwilling to part with him, he declined the invitation. In 1735 Mr. Clendon Dawkes was some time upon trial; but the choice of the people ultimately centered in Mr. Thomas Flower, Jun. The father of this minister was Mr. Thomas Flower, pastor of the church at Bourton-upon-the-Water, who died there in 1740. His ordination at Unicorn-yard was on April 29, 1736. Mr. John Gill and Mr. John Brine commenced in prayer; Mr. Biddle, of Deptford, asked the usual questions of the church and the minister; Mr. Flower, sen. prayed the ordination prayer; Mr.

Samuel Wilson gave the charge; Mr. Braithwaite preached to the people, and Mr. Dew concluded the service.

After being pastor of the church about eight years, Mr. Flower resigned the office; after which he preached for some time as a probationer at Abingdon, Berks; but was not invited to settle as pastor. It is supposed he afterwards supplied for a time at Horsley, Gloucestershire, and then settled at Cirencester, July 25, 1747, where he resided about fourteen years. Here he preached every other Lord's-day, and the other half of his time he preached at Cheltenham. He left Cirencester about 1761, and returned to London. He never after took the charge of any church, but preached occasionally. While in the country he preached at an Association held at Broadmead, Bristol, in 1758. He had been educated at Bristol, under Mr. Bernard Foskett. The above particulars are from the manuscripts of Mr. Joshua Thomas; who adds "He was a person of considerable wealth. I have been informed by a good judge that he had certainly great talents, and was affectionate in the pulpit, but had not the best utterance."

Though Mr. Flower continued to preach occasionally, it should seem his true character was that of a tradesman, as he was distinguished by the appellation of "worldly-minded Flower." He lived, after he had looked back towards the world instead of following the gospel plough, and had thus proved himself not fit for the kingdom of God, about twenty-three years; and after having procured what was called "a handsome subsistence," he died September 3, 1767, aged 61 years, and was buried in Bunhill-fields. Mr. Flower published a volume consisting of thirteen sermons, in 1740, and a funeral sermon preached at Cirencester at the interment of Mrs. Elizabeth Bluckwell, who died April 5, 1754, in the eighty-third year of her age.

It was during the time of Mr. Flower that the church in

Unicorn-yard was agitated with a question which seems never before to have been considered among the Baptists as a matter of "doubtful disputation."

On February 14, 1741-2, a charge was exhibited at the church-meeting, against a Mr. Baskerville, of walking disorderly in taking the sacrament in the church of England, in order to execute the office or trust of common council-man of the city, which was apprehended to be a profanation of that sacred institution. Mr. Baskerville admitted these facts, but declared he would not have done it, had not the laws of England required it as a necessary qualification for that trust. A large majority of brethren gave it as their opinion that it was a profanation of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; Mr. Baskerville complained of this as destructive of the right of private judgment, and said, from the love he bore to all the members of the church, he was grieved that his conduct had given them offence.

Mr. Baskerville, on being privately admonished by the pastor and some of the deacons, in the name of the church, again professed sorrow that his conduct had caused them grief; but added, "As to the matter which has given the occasion of their grief, I remain still of the same mind, and unless I receive further conviction shall, if alike called to it, do the same again: but I will endeavour to obtain conviction, and examine the arguments and pray for further illumination, if I am in an error; and do promise that I will never take the sacrament in the church of England again without first acquainting the church with it, and if they vote it unlawful shall desire a dismission from them to join some other church."

The church having regard to Mr. Baskerville's acknowledgment of sorrow for the offence, and to his promises, agreed he should be continued in their communion; though they continued of the same mind, yet for the sake of peace they

agreed he should still enjoy the ordinances with them, &c. The further particulars of this affair may be found in the events of the year 1742-3. p. 228 to 233.

Mr. Josiah Thompson, who succeeded as pastor, was a son of the Rev. Josiah Thompson, who resided at Kingston-upon-Thames, and who will be spoken of under the article Pershore, Worcestershire.

This young minister had been called to the work by the church in Prescott-street, and was dismissed from them to Unicorn-yard, November 25, 1744. On February 23, 1745-6, he was publicly ordained to the pastoral office; when Mr. Edward Wallin began the service by prayer, Mr. Samuel Wilson asked the questions and gave the charge to the minister, Mr. Thompson, senior, prayed the ordination prayer, and Mr. Joseph Stennett preached to the people. Mr. Thompson concluded the service.

Mr. Thompson was an educated man, but he does not appear to have done much good as a minister, or to have been very laborious in his Master's work.

He resigned his charge August 16, 1761. During two years from 1757 to 1759, he was assisted by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Caleb Evans. Mr. Thompson preached in the afternoons to Dr. Savage's congregation, in Bury-street, which was near his residence in St. Mary-Axe. He retired to Clapham Common, to live upon his fortune, after giving up his pastoral office in Unicorn-yard, through ill health, and spent the remainder of his days as a retired gentleman. He died in June, 1806, at the advanced age of eighty-two.

The church was, as might have been expected, in a very low condition when Mr. Thompson left it; the feelings and habits of a gentleman, unless rendered subservient to the edification of the church, by an humble attention to the wishes and necessities of the people of his charge, are unfavourable to the welfare of our churches. Those ministers who think worldly

pomp and distinction necessary to their happiness, would find the Established Church much more congenial to their inclinations than the state of society in Dissenting communities.

Mr. Thompson had made some manuscript collections of the History of the Baptist Churches, which have been of use in compiling this work. Two large volumes were deposited at his death in Dr. Williams's Library, Red Cross-street.

CHURCH IN CARTER-LANE.

THAT part of the church in Goat-street which chose Mr. John Gill, met in the school-room of Mr. Thomas Crosby until the lease of the place, formerly Mr. Keach's and Mr. Stinton's, expired, when Mr. Gill and his friends took possession of it, and occupied it till they built the new place in Carter-lane, in 1757, where the prosperous congregation which has so long enjoyed the labours of Dr. John Rippon, now assembles.

John Gill, D. D. This eminently learned and laborious writer and preacher was born at Kettering, in Northamptonshire, Nov. 23, 1697. His father was Mr. Edward Gill, a member of the Dissenting congregation in that town, then composed of persons both Pædobaptists and Baptists. The latter having been rendered uncomfortable in their communion, were compelled to form a separate church, choosing Mr. William Wallis a preaching member of the church, who had previously baptized by immersion those of the congregation who desired it. Mr. Edward Gill and his wife were some of the first members, and continued so till their deaths. Mr. Gill soon became a deacon of the church, and obtained a good report for his grace, his piety, and holy conversation.

John his son discovered, at a very early period, a fine capa-

city for receiving instruction, and was sent when very young to the grammar-school in Kettering, kept by a member of the established church. By his uncommon diligence and application, he not only surpassed in learning all the scholars of his own age, but outstripped many who were his seniors. On the change which took place about this period in the measures of the Queen's administration, the master insisted that all his scholars should attend the parish church, and learn the church catechism. John Gill's parents, considering this injunction as an imposition on the rights of conscience, removed their son from the school. He had, however, made so good use of his time, that though not more than twelve years of age, he had mastered the principal Latin classics, and had made such a proficiency in Greek as to obtain for him some marks of kind attention from several neighbouring clergymen, who occasionally exercised him, and encouraged his pursuits. It is said that when the bookseller's shop was opened, which was only on the market days, John Gill was always there for the sake of consulting different authors. This attracted so much attention, that it was common for people to confirm their statements with the asseveration, 'It is as surely the case as that John Gill is in the bookseller's shop.'

His parents, not being in affluent circumstances, could not, as some others did, send John to some distant academy; and all the methods they devised to obtain for him the advantages of a literary education proved fruitless. Ministers, too, of different denominations endeavoured to procure assistance from some rich persons in London, and sent specimens of his attainments for that purpose. This also failed, as they received the discouraging reply, "that he was too young at present to be placed on the funds of any public institution, and that should he continue to acquire knowledge as he had already done, he would pass through the common circle of learning,

before he would be old enough to engage in any public employment."

Notwithstanding he was thus left to his own unassisted energies, he yet improved himself in Latin and Greek, and began the studies of logic, rhetoric, and natural and moral philosophy. With the help only of Buxtorf's Hebrew Grammar and Lexicon he made considerable proficiency in that language. At this time, and till he was nearly nineteen years of age, he assisted his father in weaving, improving all his spare time in the acquisition of the learned languages.

Some time before this he was brought under deep and lasting convictions of his sinful state. He had heard a sermon from Mr. William Wallin, from Gen. iii. 9;—*And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou?* His distress of soul was for a time very great, but he was at length enabled to fly for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before him, by receiving and resting upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel.

On Nov. 1, 1716, Mr. Gill made a public profession of religion, by relating, to the satisfaction of the church, what God had done for his soul. On the same day Mr. Thomas Wallin, who had succeeded his deceased brother William in the pastoral office, baptized him in a river, in the presence of a large number of spectators. The following Lord's day, Nov. 4, he was admitted a member of the church, and partook of the Lord's Supper.

The members of the church having previously considered him as possessing gifts for the work of the ministry, desired him the same evening, at a private house, to speak from the Scriptures. He accordingly read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, on which he made some expository remarks: they were so well satisfied, that they requested him to deliver a sermon before them in the same private manner the next Lord's-day evening. This he

complied with, and preached his first sermon from 1 Cor. ii. 2; *For I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* This was in the year 1716.

He soon after removed, at the solicitation of some of his friends in London, to Higham Ferrars, a distance of six miles from Kettering. A minister from Wales, Mr. John Davis, had been settled there, and Mr. Gill hoped, by living in his house, to obtain from him assistance in his literary studies; the design of his friends was that he might also strengthen a new interest which had lately been formed at Higham. Mr. Gill continued here upwards of a year, and while at Higham married a member of the church, Elizabeth Negus, who lived with him happily in the marriage union upwards of forty-six years.

He had occasionally assisted the church at Kettering while at Higham Ferrars, and he very soon after his marriage removed back to Kettering. He did not however long continue, as he received a pressing invitation, at the beginning of the year 1719, to supply the church in Goat-street, Horsely-down, lately deprived of its pastor, the excellent Mr. Benjamin Stinton.

Mr. Gill preached at Goat-street during the months of April and May, and then returned to Kettering. Two months after, he was invited to come again to London, and on the 10th of March it was proposed to the church, "Whether he should be invited to undertake the pastoral office?" This being wished by many of the members, he accepted the office on the 20th following. The other part, however, having the possession of the meeting-house, Mr. Gill and his friends were compelled to leave it, and engaged Mr. Crosby's school-room for worship. In that place he was solemnly ordained over the church, March 22, 1720. Mr. John Skepp asked the usual questions of the church, and Mr. Crosby a deacon, (who after-

wards published the History of the Baptists,) gave satisfactory replies on their behalf. Messrs. Matthews and Ridgeway prayed; Messrs. Curtis and Key assisted in laying on of hands, &c.; and Mr. John Noble delivered the charge to the pastor, founded upon Acts xx. 28. *Take heed to yourselves and all the flock, &c.* Mr. Skepp addressed the church from Heb. xiii. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, for they watch for your souls, &c.* Three deacons were also ordained at the same time by the imposition of the hands of the pastors present.

The church continued to worship in Mr. Crosby's school-room till the other branch of it had completed their new meeting-house in Unicorn-yard, when Mr. Gill and his people again took possession of the meeting-house in Goat-street.

From Mr. Gill's intimate acquaintance with Mr. John Skepp, he was introduced to a knowledge of the Rabbinical Hebrew learning; and after Mr. Skepp's death, he purchased most of his Hebrew and Rabbinical books; to this circumstance is to be attributed his superior attainments in that sort of literature, which so conspicuously appears in his Exposition of the Scriptures.

The establishment of a lecture at Great East-cheap, which Mr. Gill preached for upwards of twenty-six years, will be noticed in connection with the history of that church.

Having distinguished himself by many learned publications, Mr. Gill received, in 1748, a diploma, creating him D. D. from the Marischal College and University at Aberdeen. On that occasion Professor Osborn, the Principal, told him, in a letter, that it was granted him "on account of the honest and learned defence of the true sense of the Holy Scriptures, against the profane attacks of deists and infidels, and the reputation his other works had procured him in the learned world, &c." When Dr. Gill was congratulated, by the deacons, on his having this honorary mark of literary distinction, he re-

plied laconically, "*I neither thought it, nor bought it, nor sought it.*"*

In the year 1752 the Doctor, as he must now be called, had a very providential escape from being killed in his study. On

* This degree appears to have been considered, both by the university which bestowed it, and the person who received it, as a distinction purely *literary;* the only ground, in the opinion of the writer, on which any minister of the gospel can be justified in using it. He feels happy to be supported in this sentiment by the conduct of his late excellent and lamented friend, Mr. Andrew Fuller. When a degree of D.D. was sent him from the Brown University Rhode Island College, he quaintly said, "Now I must learn Latin in order to read it." He did not undervalue the respect intended to be shewn him, but considered himself as not qualified to use it. A most eloquent preacher of the present day, told the writer his objections to receiving such a diploma which had been sent him. "If it be considered a *religious* distinction," said Mr. H. "then I dare not accept it, because I consider it as directly opposed to our Lord's command, *Be ye not called Rabbi.* If it be a *literary* distinction, then I do not consider myself as qualified to use it." Reasons, which were, when used as in this case, expressive of great piety and great humility! Upon what rational principle the modern practice of ministers obtaining the degree of LL.D. rests, the writer is at a loss to conjecture. Johnson defines it as "the highest degree in the faculty of law;" and the person who receives it wishes the world to believe him to be "an able or learned man." Now, however learned or able such ministers may be in divinity, does it therefore follow they are also able or learned in the laws of the land? With just as much propriety might they receive the degree of M.D. though they know nothing of physic, as LL.D. knowing nothing of the laws. How must learned proctors smile, (perhaps not, however, except it be angrily and contemptuously,) to find a Dissenting minister, signing his name LL.D. Would it be wonderful if the address of Appelles to the cobbler was to be repeated in such a case?

These remarks are not intended to convey any censure upon the conduct of Dr. Gill, Dr. Gifford, Dr. Joseph or Dr. Samuel Stennett, Dr. Evans, or Dr. Jenkins, for having used the degree of D.D. as all of them were learned men. The writer has confined his observations to *deceased* Baptist ministers, though he believes the names of some *living* characters might have been mentioned with equal propriety.

Lord's day, March 15, in the morning, there was a violent hurricane which damaged many houses both in London and West-

In Doctor Rippon's memoir of his predecessor Dr. Gill, he gives us the following copy of this diploma, which he remarks, "will be unquestionably a matter of innocent curiosity to some readers:"—

NOS Gymnasiarcha, Artium et Linguarum Professores, Moderatores UNIVERSITATIS MARISCHALLANÆ ABERDEENSIS—OMNIBUS LITERARUM STUDIOSIS S.

"*Quum viri olim prudentissimi, Academiarum Collegiorumque fundatores, eum in finem gradus, quos vocant, Academicos excogitarunt et instituerint, ut bene postea de literis merituri haud ignobilia virtutis et ingenii præmia nanciscerentur; id curæ videtur Academiarum cujuscunque ævi Moderatorum fidei commissum, ut eximios hosce viros dispicerent, et congruis honoribus, pro cujusque doctrina et meritis, ornarent: quumque* Nobis *compertum sit, virum reverendum* JOANNEM GILL, A.M. *Ecclesiæ apud Londinenses pastorem, præclaros in Sacris Literis, Linguis Orientalibus et Antiquitatibus Judaicis progressus fecisse, eisque præditum esse moribus, qui virum pium probumque deceant ac ornent.* Propterea *scialis* Nos *Gymnasiarcham et Moderatores supra dictos,* Eum *summo consensu, S. S. Theologiæ* Doctorem *creasse et constituisse, omnibusque et singulis istius gradus privilegiis donasse, Ipsumque veris ubique Scientiæ et Virtutis cultoribus sedulo commendatum habere* Nos, *qui chirographis nostris publicoque* Universitatis *sigillo Diploma hocce muniendum curavimus.*

"*Datum Aberdeæ*
Ex Universitate Marischallana
Octavo Kal. Aprilis
A. Æ. C. M.DCC.XLIIX."

JOA. OSBORN, Gymnasiarcha.
ROBERTUS POLLOCK, S.S.T.P.
JA. DONALDSON, L.L. O.O.P.
FRANCIS SKENE, P. P.
DAV. VERNOR, LL.D. et P.P.
JOANNES STEWART, Math. P.
DAVID FORDYCE, P.P.
JA. GORDON, Med. P."

TRANSLATION.

"WE, the Principal, the Professors of Arts and Languages, and the Regents of the Marischal College of Aberdeen, to all the Lovers of Learning, Greeting.

"Whereas in former ages men renowned for wisdom, the founders of

minster. Soon after leaving his study to attend public worship, a stack of chimnies were precipitated through the roof of his house, which broke his writing-table to pieces, at which he had been sitting but a little while before. Noticing this deliverance to a friend, he seriously observed in reply to what he had sometime before told the Doctor, that Dr. Halley said, Close study prolonged a man's life, by keeping him out of harm's way; "What," said he, "becomes of Dr. Halley's words now, since a man may come to danger and harm in his closet, as well as on the highway, if not protected by the special care of God's providence?"

Academies and Colleges, have invented and instituted what they call academical degrees, in order that they who should afterwards deserve well of learning might obtain suitable rewards of their virtue and genius; it appears to be a duty enjoined upon the Governors of Academies in every age, to look out for such eminent men, and to decorate them with suitable honours according to their respective learning and merits: and whereas we have discovered that the Reverend John Gill, A. M. Pastor of a Church at London, has made a very distinguished progress in Sacred Literature, the Oriental Languages, and Jewish Antiquities, and is endowed with those manners which become a pious and upright man: on these accounts know ye, that we, the Principal and Regents above-mentioned, have unanimously created and constituted him Doctor of Sacred Divinity, and endowed him with all and singular the privileges of that degree; and that we do hereby earnestly recommend him to the cultivators of Science and Virtue wherever they may be. In witness whereof we have signed this Diploma with our hands, and sealed it with the public seal of the University.

"Given at the Marischal College, in the University of Aberdeen, on the eighth of the Kalends of April, in the year of the Christian Æra, 1748."

JOHN OSBORN, Principal.
ROBERT POLLOCK, S. S. T. P.
JAMES DONALDSON, L. L. O. O. P.
FRANCIS SKENE, P. P.
DAVID VERNOR, LL. D. and P. P.
JOHN STEWART, Math. P.
DAVID FORDYCE, P. P.
JAMES GORDON, Med. P."

It is not possible to notice all the incidents in the long life of this faithful servant of Christ. His last labours among the people of his charge, were some sermons from the song of Zacharias, Luke i. 78. The last text he preached from was, *By the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God.* His health had been on the decay for some time, and he thought his work was done. The decay of nature, however, was very gradual, frequently attended with violent pain, and an almost total loss of appetite. He bore the visitation of his heavenly Father with patient composure, and with great resignation to the Divine will; never uttering a single complaint. Though he was prevented from preaching, he continued busy in his study till within two or three weeks of his decease, and always appeared calm and cheerful.

In the prospect of his dissolution he thus expressed himself to his relation Mr. John Gill, pastor of the church at St. Albans. "I depend wholly and alone upon the free, sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love of God, the firm and everlasting covenant of grace, and my interest in the persons of the Trinity, for my whole salvation; and not upon any righteousness of my own; nor on any thing in me, or done by me, under the influences of the Holy Spirit;"—and then, as confirming what he had said,—"Not upon any service of mine, which I have been assisted to perform for the good of the church, do I depend; but upon my interest in the persons of the Trinity, the free grace of God, and the blessings of grace streaming to me through the blood and righteousness of Christ, as the ground of my hope. These are no new things to me, but what I have been long acquainted with; *what I can live and die by.* I apprehend I shall not be long here, but this you may tell to any of my friends."

Nearly in the same words he expressed himself to other friends. To one, he said, "I *have nothing to make me uneasy;*" and then repeated the following lines of Dr. Watts, expressive of his gratitude for redeeming mercy; and that his comforts

in death were not derived merely from a view of the eternal purposes which ensured the salvation of the elect; but from a consciousness that he had through grace been enabled to rest as a poor guilty sinner, upon the finished work of the Redeemer.

"He raised me from the deeps of sin,
The gates of gaping hell,
And fix'd my standing more secure
Than 'twas before I fell."*

The tranquillity of soul and internal peace and joy he felt from thus *rejoicing in hope,* never left him; the last words he was heard to utter, were, "Oh my Father, my Father." Thus expired the humble and holy John Gill, after having spent nearly sixty years in the service of Christ, expressing the disposition enjoined by our Lord upon his disciples, *After ye have done all say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.*

Dr. Gill died at his house in Camberwell, Surry, October 14, 1771, aged seventy-three years, ten months, and ten days.

Dr. Samuel Stennett in his funeral sermon says, "That he was a man of strict integrity I believe all will acknowledge. But though his steadiness was such, that having come to a

* The writer once by accident went into a meeting-house in London, where the minister is a *very high* Calvinist. The clerk too, on that occasion, proved himself to be as *sound* as his minister! Being quite sure Dr. Watts had mistaken the subject, he ventured to alter the last two lines of the verse above mentioned, thus,

"And fix'd my standing *most* secure
In Christ before I fell."

It was easy to perceive that this sound clerk was *very high;* but then it was quite easy to discover that this scheme was not *scriptural;* as that standing could not be *most secure,* which did not prevent the elect from *falling.*

point with himself upon any opinion or fact, he was scarce ever to be removed from it; yet, being convinced of his mistake he was ready to acknowledge it. And though he knew how with spirit to resent an injury, he knew how also with becoming meekness to endure and forgive it. His warmth may indeed upon some occasions exceed, yet he had prudence enough to check it; and failed not afterwards, like a good man as he was, to feel great pain on account of it. And however his inflexibility, his recluse manner of life, and the small share he bore in conversation, might excite in some persons an idea unfavourable to his character; yet he knew how to be obliging in his carriage to strangers, and would be innocently pleasant with his friends; so that few left his house or his company, without some impressions to his advantage in these respects.

"His religious principles, which were strictly Calvinistical, he maintained with great warmth,—a warmth that proceeded, I doubt not, from a firm persuasion of their truth and importance. Yet amidst all his zeal, which was accompanied with undissembled piety, as well as unshaken integrity, he had a charitable and affectionate regard for those who held the grand leading principles of Christianity, though they could not agree with him in his explanation of some points. To exalt and magnify the free grace of God in the redemption and salvation of sinners, and to exclude all boasting on our part, were the grand objects of his discourses and writings. But the unfavourable consequences which too many were disposed to draw from his reasonings he constantly denied, and warmly opposed; maintaining the utility and importance of good works, and indeed their indispensable necessity as the fruit of the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit to the character of the real Christian. And as he was himself most exemplary in his conversation, so he heartily concurred in every measure to discountenance a licentious conduct, especially in those who made

a profession of religion. What grief he felt when at any time Christ was wounded in the house of his pretended friends, as well as the joy he felt when tidings of a different kind were brought him, his family and those who were acquainted with him well remember, nor will the remembrance thereof be easily erased from their minds."

"His removal," says his biographer and successor, "was deeply felt. It spread a solemn gloom over the church in which he had honourably presided more than FIFTY-ONE years. They immediately assembled to consult on the best method of shewing the last token of respect to their departed, venerable, pastor. The church unanimously desired that they might have the honour, if not of making the arrrangements for his funeral, yet of defraying the expenses of it. But the affluent circumstances and tender affection of the bereaved family induced them to decline the proposal which had been respectfully delivered to them by the deacons. On the day of interment, the members and hearers of the society, in a vast train of mourning coaches, affectionately followed his remains to the Dissenting burying-ground, Moorfields, where he was deposited in the family tomb, which is situated, according to the intersections by which the ground is divided, in the distance 19 east and west; and 65 and 66, north and south. His respected friend and admirer, the Rev. Mr. Toplady, then in the bloom of life, most earnestly desired he might officiate at the grave. This affectionate respect was suitably acknowledged, but Dr. Gill was conscientiously a Dissenter, though he might in his youth have been sent to one of the universities, had he and his parents approved of it. And as he finished his course, most intimately united to his own denomination, without even the semblance of a dereliction either of principle or practice, the church were happy in the appointment of the Rev. Benjamin Wallin, M. A. to deliver the address at his grave, and Dr. Samuel Stennett to preach the funeral discourse; (this he did from 2 Tim. iv. 8.)

though Dr. Gill had left directions behind him not to have any funeral sermon preached on his account, as he never was fond of these services. The address and sermon were printed; the numbers besides, which were preached all through Great Britain, and in various parts of America, when the providence was known, exceeded probably all that had ever been known before or since, respecting an individual,—proclaiming, as with the voice of unusual lamentation, *A great man is fallen in Israel.*"

"As a minister, in his early days," says Dr. Rippon, "few persons were more animated than himself. He came into the pulpit, at times, with an heavenly lustre on his countenance, *in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ;* enriched, and generally enriching."—"When the fervour of youth had abated, the attention of his congregation, and the respect of the church, were secured to his preaching, by his solemn deportment, his expressive language, his perspicuous method, his nervous reasoning, his interesting address; and by his substantial matter accurately delivered. And all being ornamented with his own personal religion, and crowned with the superabundant influences of the Spirit of God, he sometimes preached as with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and poured out his prayers with divine fervency, into the very bosom of God."—"As a pastor, he presided over his flock with dignity and affection. He felt himself exceedingly distressed when any of his people disgraced their profession by errors either in doctrine or in practice. From both sources he had his share of sorrows, as the records of his faithful church discipline evince." One extract proves that Dr. Gill was far from thinking the Antinomian scheme was not a very dangerous error. In his own handwriting is the following account of the result of the discipline of the church respecting some of its members. 'Agreed, that to deny the internal sanctification of the Spirit, as a principle of grace and holiness which, though but a begun work, and as yet incomplete, is an abiding work of grace, and will abide, not-

withstanding all corruptions, temptations, and snares, and be performed by the Author of it until the day of Christ, when it will be the saint's meetness for eternal glory; is a grievous error, highly reflects dishonour on the blessed Spirit and his operations of grace on the heart, is subversive of true religion and powerful godliness, and renders persons unfit for church-communion. Wherefore, it is further agreed, that such persons who appear to have embraced this error be not admitted to the communion of this church; and should any such who are members of it appear to have received it, and continue in it, that they be forthwith excluded from it. Two members then present declaring themselves to be of the opinion condemned in the above resolution, and also a third person who was absent, but who was well known to have been under the influence of this awful delusion, were consequently excluded that evening." Dr. Rippon adds, "At church meetings he was admired, one while for his gentleness and fidelity, and another while for his self-possession and wisdom. And when it was necessary for him to *magnify his office*, (and no one knew better how to do it,) he discovered himself to be both a servant of Christ, and the servant of the church for his sake."*

* It is mentioned as an instance that the Doctor could, when he discovered sincerity in any of his complaining members, "bear with their weaknesses, failings, and infirmities," that when a pious old woman visited him to complain, in great trouble, about some new tune having been introduced by the Clerk, the Doctor, after patiently hearing her tale of woe, how her mind had been hurt, &c.—asked her, "Sister, do you understand singing?" "No, sir." "What, can't you sing?" "No, sir." The Doctor did not run the risk of hurting her feelings, by saying, that the people who could not sing, and who did not understand, were the last who should trouble the pastor with such complaints; but meekly replied, "Sister, what tunes should you like us to sing?" "Why, sir, I should very much like David's tunes." "Well," replied the Doctor, "if you will get David's tunes for us, we can then try to sing them." Another instance shews his manner of reproving *rudeness*. "A cynical old man, who had

As an author, he was most indefatigable. It is said "if all his writings had been collected, and had been uniformly printed in the size of his Exposition upon the Old and New Testaments, they would have made above ten thousand folio pages! All this was his own composition, the result of his own most laborious studies, written with his own hand, and published by his own care; no one reading the sheets as they came from the press but himself. In the year 1770 he wrote in the margin of a sheet of letter press which he intended should be the last for publication, "*the last of more than ten thousand!*"

I shall endeavour to give a list of his publications at the close of this brief sketch of a minister who was certainly an ornament to the denomination to which he considered it his honour to belong, and the distinctive principles of which he was always ready to defend; one instance of which may, perhaps, not be unnecessary to mention. In 1726, a pamphlet was published anonymously entitled, "The manner of baptizing with water cleared up from the word of God and right reason, &c." This was in the form of a dialogue, and it afterwards appeared to have been written by Mr. Matthias Maurice, an Independent minister, at Rowel, not far from Kettering. Dr. Gill was applied to by his old friends there to write an answer to it.

an antipathy against the Doctor, more than once had grinned contempt from the gallery; and sometimes would meet him at the foot of the pulpit, asking contemptuously, "Is this preaching?" He at first took no notice of this coarse vulgarity; but some time after the same churlish man, meeting him as he came from the pulpit, said sarcastically, "Is this the great Dr. Gill?" The Doctor immediately, with the full strength of his voice, looking in his face, and pointing to the pulpit, said, "*Go up and do better—Go up and do better.*" His friends who heard it said, it was *answering a fool according to his folly*. Perhaps it was wise, after having tried the other part of the direction in vain, *Answer not a fool according to his folly*. But after all, it might have been more wise had he continued to take no notice of a man capable of such rudeness.

This he did, and published it with the title, "The ancient Mode of Baptism by Immersion," &c. Mr. Maurice replied the next year, 1727; and Dr. Gill some months after published a rejoinder, entitled, "A Defence of the ancient Mode," &c. One of the members of Mr. Maurice's church, an apothecary, named Cogan, wrote some remarks upon the rejoinder, in such a virulent and defamatory manner, that it was condemned of itself; and the writer, it is said, afterwards repented that he had published it! It was on occasion of this controversy that Mr. Gill received from Tilbury-fort a very spirited anonymous letter, urging him to follow up his victories, &c. The letter concluded with the following lines:—

"Stennett, at first, his furious foe did meet,
Cleanly compelled him to a swift retreat;
Next powerful Gale, by mighty blast made fall
The church's Dagon, the gigantic *Wall:*
May you with like success be victor still,
And give your rude antagonist his fill,
To shew that Gale is yet alive in Gill.

Instead of attempting a description of Dr. Gill as a writer and a theologian, I shall copy from writers of other religious communities. The Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady, A. B. a clergyman of the church of England, thus describes him in a writing dated July 29, 1772:—

"Such were the indefatigable labours, such the exemplary life, and such the comfortable death of this great and eminent person. If any one man can be supposed to have trod the whole circle of human learning, it was Dr. Gill. His attainments, both in abstruse and polite literature, were (what is very uncommon) equally extensive and profound. Providence had, to this end, endued him with a firmness of constitution, and an unremitting vigour of mind, which rarely fall to the lot of the sedentary and learned. It would, perhaps, try the constitutions

of half the *literati* in England, only to *read*, with care and attention, the whole of what he *wrote*.

"The Doctor considered not any subject superficially, or by halves. As deeply as human sagacity, enlightened by grace, could penetrate, he went to the bottom of every thing he engaged in. With a solidity of judgment, and with an acuteness of discernment, peculiar to few, he exhausted, as it were, the very soul and substance of most arguments he undertook. His style, too, resembles himself; it is manly, nervous, plain: conscious, if I may so speak, of the unutterable dignity, value, and importance of the freight it conveys, it drives directly and perspicuously to the point in view, regardless of affected cadence, and superior to the little niceties of professed refinement.

"Perhaps no man, since the days of St. Austin, has written so largely in defence of the system of grace; and, certainly, no man has treated that momentous subject, in all its branches, more closely, judiciously, and successfully. What was said of Edward the Black Prince, That he never fought a battle, which he did not win; what has been remarked of the great Duke of Marlborough, That he never undertook a siege, which he did not carry; may be justly accommodated to our great philosopher and divine: who, so far as the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel are concerned, never besieged an error, which he did not force from its strong holds; nor ever encountered an adversary, whom he did not baffle and subdue.

"His learning and labours, if exceedable, were exceeded only by the invariable sanctity of his life and conversation. From his childhood to his entrance on the ministry, and from his entrance on the ministry to the moment of his dissolution, not one of his most inveterate opposers was ever able to charge him with the least shadow of immorality. Himself, no less than his writings, demonstrated, that *the doctrine of grace does not lead to licentiousness.*

"Those who had the honour and happiness of being admitted into the number of his friends, can go still further in their testimony. They know that his moral demeanour was more than blameless: it was, from first to last, consistently exemplary. And, indeed, an undeviating consistency, both in his views of evangelical truths, and in his obedience, as a servant of God, was one of those qualities, by which his cast of character was eminently marked. He was, in every respect, *a burning and a shining light*—burning, with love to God, to truth, and to souls —shining, as *an ensample to believers, in word, in faith, in purity;* a pattern of good works, and a model of all holy conversation and godliness.

"The Doctor has been accused of bigotry, by some, whowe re unacquainted with his real temper and character. Bigotry may be defined, such a blind and furious attachment to any particular principle, or set of principles, as disposes to wish ill to those persons who differ from us in judgment. Simple bigotry, therefore, is, the spirit of persecution, without the power: and persecution is no other than bigotry, armed with force, and carrying its malevolence into act. Hence it appears, that to be clearly convinced of certain propositions, as true; and to be steadfast in adhering to them, upon that conviction; nay, to assert and defend those propositions, to the utmost extent of argument; can no more be called bigotry, than the shining of the sun can be termed ostentation. If, in any parts of his controversial writings, the Doctor has been warmed into some little neglects of ceremony toward his assailants; it is to be ascribed, not to bigotry, (for he possessed a very large share of benevolence and candour,) but to that complexional sensibility, inseparable, perhaps, from human nature in its present state; and from which, it is certain, the apostles themselves were not exempt.

"His doctrinal and practical writings will live, and be admired, and be a standing blessing to posterity, when their opposers are forgotten, or only remembered by the refutations he

has given them. While true religion, and sound learning, have a single friend remaining in the British empire, the works and name of Gill will be precious and revered.

"May the readers of this inadequate sketch, together with him, who (though of a very different denomination from the Doctor) pays this last and unexaggerated tribute of justice to the honoured memory of so excellent a person, participate, on earth, and everlastingly celebrate in heaven, that sovereign grace, which its departed champion so largely experienced,—to which he was so distinguished an ornament,—and of which he was so able a defender!"

Mr. Walter Wilson says, in the History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches, "Such were the life and death of Dr. Gill, who, for the value and extent of his writings, will be considered by future generations as one of the fathers of the church. His natural and acquired abilities were very considerable. He possessed a clear and solid judgment, and an uncommonly retentive memory. It point of application and industry, he had scarcely his equal. In has been remarked, that great scholars are but seldom formed for social intercourse. This was very much the case with Dr. Gill, whose recluse manner of life made him appear to but little advantage in conversation with his friends. His reputation, however, was very extensive; and he enjoyed the correspondence and esteem of many learned and excellent persons. His religious principles were strictly Calvinistical, and he maintained them with firmness and ability. In one point he differed from most of his brethren. It was not his practice to address unconverted sinners, nor to enforce the invitations of the gospel. This arose out of the view which he took of the divine decrees; upon which point he was in opposition to Dr. Crisp.* In his method

* In 1755 Dr. Gill had re-published the works of Dr. Crisp, which had at the beginning of the century given rise to so much contention, espe-

of explaining some doctrines of the gospel, he was usually considered a Supra-lapsarian, and was by some termed an

cially among the Presbyterian and Independent ministers. To the first volume he prefixed some memoirs of the Doctor's life, and added explanatory notes, with a view to defend Dr. Crisp from the charge of Antinomianism. It is very true that Dr. Crisp did not maintain the *distinctive* principle of Antinomians, viz. *that the moral law of God is not a rule of life to a believer;* because he has expressly asserted, when writing of Christ's *mystical* members, "The law continues till the whole body of Christ be made complete, by an actual subsistence of every member in him. Now this seed will not be wholly complete till the consummation of all things. But in respect of the rules of righteousness, or the matter of obedience, we are under the law still, or else we are lawless, to live every man as seems good in his own eyes, which I know no *true Christian* dares so much as think." This proves probably that Dr. Crisp thought holiness of heart and life essential to the Christian character, and a necessary evidence of being united to Christ; but then it does not follow but that those of his hearers and readers who were *not true Christians*, but whose *hearts were carnal, and at enmity against God, not subject to the law of God*, would very naturally conclude from his statements respecting the eternal union with Christ having actually transferred the sins of the elect to Christ and the righteousness of Christ to the elect, even while they were dead in sins and unbelievers, that the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration and sanctification was unnecessary; and, therefore, that personal holiness, consisting in supreme love to God, and obedience to the law of God, were not essential to salvation. There can be no doubt, (at least, so the writer thinks,) but what those who sow the seed of the actual justification of the elect before faith, or from eternity, will have to reap a crop of Antinomian practices in the lives of their hearers. Even the correct statements of Dr. Gill upon this subject, it should seem, did not prevent some of his members from "denying the necessity of the internal work of the Spirit as a sanctifying principle of grace and holiness." The writer regrets that Dr. Gill should have sweetened a poisonous drug, or put his indorsement to a bad bill, by explaining and recommending the works of Dr. Crisp.

Antinomian.* It is certain, however, that he constantly denied the unfavourable consequences which some were disposed to draw from his reasonings, and always maintained the necessity of good works to the real Christian."

Though the labours of Dr. Gill were protracted during the space of more than half a century, yet the church does not appear to have been much increased.† While under the fos-

* The Doctor was charged by Dr. Taylor, in an address published to students in divinity, about 1736, with denying the *necessity of good works in order to salvation*; a position which Dr. Taylor thought deducible from the sentiments of Dr. Gill respecting eternal actual justification. This Dr. Gill thought to be slanderous, and he replied with great warmth, denying the correctness of the inference, and maintaining what he had formerly asserted, that good works were not necessary as the *causes* of salvation, and that they were not necessary as *means* of *procuring*, or of *applying* salvation; but that, on the account of God who had commanded them, and on account of ourselves as the evidence of the genuineness of faith, and of the certainty of our election and vocation; and on the account of our neighbours, and on the enemies of religion; these he considered the *necessary* uses for which believers are *to maintain* good words. "But," said he, "I have chosen to suffer reproach, the loss of good name and reputation,—to forego popularity, wealth, and friends,—yea, to be traduced as an Antinomian, rather than to drop or conceal any one branch of truth respecting Christ and his grace."

On one occasion, when Dr. Gill was preaching on the kingly office of Christ, as since published in that excellent work, his *Body of Divinity*, the Doctor levelled some shafts with great severity at the Antinomian scheme. A gentleman from the country, who was present, was afterwards asked by a member of the church, his acquaintance,—"Well, sir, what do you think of our Doctor to-day?" He replied, "You must not be offended with me, but I assure you, if I had not been told it was the great Dr. Gill who preached, I should have said I had heard an Arminian!" So little dependance is to be placed upon the opinions of different hearers of the same minister, and respecting the same sermon.

† It is said that during the two last years of his life, he was not able,

tering care of Mr. Benjamin Keach, other churches, like young scions, grew out of its roots; *As a spreading vine planted by the rivers of waters, it sent forth its boughs to the sea, and its branches to the rivers:* but at the death of Dr. Gill, they were less nu-

except very seldom, to preach more than once a day. The congregation declined; the young people joined other congregations. The church, after mature consideration, resolved to propose to the Doctor, whether it might not be desirable to procure him constant assistance in his ministerial work. It appears to the writer, that the answer of this great man, April 29, 1771, proves him to have been either in his dotage, or under the influence of improper selfishness. It contained the following written sentiments: "That Christ gives *pastors* to churches is certain, but that he gives *co-pastors* is not so certain. A co-pastor is an officer the Scripture is entirely silent about, and which is much the same thing as if a woman should marry another man, while she is under the law, dominion, and power of her former husband. The instance of Timothy serving with the apostle Paul, as a son with the father, is not the case; for they were neither of them pastors of particular churches, much less co-pastors. The one was an apostle, the other an evangelist, and both extraordinary ministers: the one accompanied the other in his travels into different countries, and was sent by him into different parts, but stayed not long in any place." And to his family and friends, to whom Dr. Rippon says he freely unbosomed himself, he said, "I should not like a co-pastor to hang about my neck, nor an assistant to be dangling at my heels!"

Surely this aged pastor must have forgotten that Christ gave, for the edification of his body the church, not only *pastors*, but *teachers;* that the church at Philippi had *bishops*, as well as *deacons*. If indeed he could have produced a command from the Lord Jesus against it, as it would be easy to do against a woman marrying again while her husband had been living, it would have been decisive! From the spirit of Paul to serve the churches for their spiritual good, *by enduring all things for the elect's sake*, it is evident that had he been settled with one church, he would not have objected to Timothy "hanging about his neck," "serving as a son with a father," nor have considered his zeal to serve the church as a thorn or a briar "dangling about his heels!"

merous by far than when Mr. Keach preached among them. As a proof of this, the new meeting-house was built upon a smaller scale than the former; and in 1653, twenty years before the Doctor's decease, there were but about one hundred and fifty members; and these were reduced, before his removal, by the young people leaving them, and uniting with other churches, to the weakening of the denomination. Only three ministers were raised up in the church during that long period, a proof of the declining zeal of its members. One of these was a Mr. Henry Scoffield, called to the ministry in the year 1749. It was indeed preserved a respectable community: it belonged to the Baptist fund, and contributed liberally towards the assistance of poorer churches. It still continues one of our most respectable churches, having been very much increased by the affectionate and evangelical ministry of Dr. Gill's successor, the Rev. Dr. John Rippon, who still survives, and, though aged, is in the full vigour of his youthful ardour.

The following epitaph was placed on Dr. Gill's tomb.

IN HOC CŒMETERIO
CONDVNTUR RELIQVIÆ
IOANNIS GILL S. T. P.
VIRI VITÆ INTEGRI
DISCIPVLI IESV INGENVI
PRÆCONIS EVANGELII INSIGNIS
DEFENSORIS FIDEI CHRISTIANÆ STRENVI;
QVI
INGENIO ERVDITIONE PIETATE ORNATVS
LABORIBVSQVE PERMAGNIS SEMPER INVICTVS.
ANNOS SVPRA QVINQVAGINTA
DOMINI MANDATA FACESSERE
ECCLESIÆ RES ADVIVARE
HOMINVM SALVTEM ASSEQVI

FERVORE PERPETVO ARDENTE
CONTENDIT.
IN CHRISTO PLACIDE OBDORMIVIT
PRIDIE ID. OCTOBRIS A. D. MDCCLXXI.
ÆTATIS SVÆ LXXIV.

TRANSLATION.

In this sepulchre
Are deposited the remains
Of JOHN GILL,
Professor of Sacred Theology;
A man of unblemished reputation,
A sincere disciple of Jesus,
An excellent preacher of the gospel,
A courageous defender of the Christian faith;
Who,
Adorned with piety, learning, and skill,
Was unwearied in works of prodigious labour,
For more than fifty years.
To obey the commands of his great Master,
To advance the interests of the church,
To promote the salvation of men,
Impelled with unabated ardour,
He put forth all his strength.
He placidly fell asleep in Christ,
The 14th day of October,
In the year of our Lord, 1771,
In the 74th year of his age.

The following is a list of Dr. Gill's works:—1. Sermon on the Death of Mr. John Smith, 1724.—2. The Urim and Thummim found with Christ, a Sermon, 1724.—3. The ancient Mode of Baptism, &c. 1726.—4. Defence of the ancient Mode of Baptism, 1727.—5. Exposition of the Song of Solomon, 1728.—6. The Prophecies of the Old Testament respecting the Messiah, 1728.—7. Two Sermons on the Resurrection of

Christ, preached at the Lime-street Lecture, 1731.—8. A Treatise on the Doctrine of the Trinity, 1731.—9. Two Sermons on the Subject of Prayer, 1732.—10. The Cause of God and Truth, 4 vols. 8vo. 1735-1738.—11. Truth defended, &c. 1736.—12. Refutation of a Dialogue between a Baptist and a Churchman, 1737.—13. The Doctrine of Grace cleared from the Charge of Licentiousness, 1737.—14. Remarks on Dr. Samuel Chandler's Sermon relating to the moral nature and fitness of things, 1738.—15. Exposition of the New Testament, 3 vols. folio, 1746, 1747,1748.—16. The Divine Right of Infant Baptism examined and disproved, 1749.—17. Sermon on Baptism, preached at Barbican, Nov. 2, 1750.—18. The Argument from Apostolic Tradition, in favour of Infant-baptism, an Answer to the Rev. Micaiah Towgood, 1751.—19. The Dissenter's Reasons for Dissenting from the Church of England, translated also into the Welch language, 1751.—20. The Doctrine of the final Perseverance of the Saints; an Answer to the Rev. John Wesley, 1752.—21. Reply to Predestination, calmly considered, in reply to the same writer, 1752.—22. Antipædo-baptism, or Infant-sprinkling an innovation, 1753.—23. Notes on the Sermons of Dr. Tobias Crisp, 1755.—24. Farewell Sermon, at the Lecture in Great Eastcheap, 1756.—25. Attendance in Places of Worship, where the Divine Name is recorded, encouraged, two sermons, 1757.—26. Exposition of the Prophetical Books, 1757, 1758.—27. Exposition of the books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Solomon's Song, 1763, 1766.—28. Strictures on David Bostwick's Defence of Infant-baptism, 1765.—29. Infant Baptism a part and pillar of Popery, 1765.—30. Dissertation concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel Points, and Accents, 1767.—31. A Dissertation concerning the Sonship of Christ, 1768.—32. A Body of Doctrinal Divinity, in 2 vols. 8vo. 1769.—33. A Body of Practical Divinity; to which is added, A Dissertation concerning the Baptism of Jewish Proselytes, 1770.

The above list is taken from the memoir of Dr. Gill, by Dr. John Rippon, prefixed to the quarto edition of his Exposition of the Scriptures, published a few years since.

Besides these, Dr. Gill published An Essay on Funeral Sermons, Orations, and Odes, in 1728.—A Sermon occasioned by the Death of Mrs. Martha Gifford, preached at Little Wild-street, 1734.—A Sermon on the High Wind in 1703, at the same place, 1736.—Funeral Sermons for the Rev. Messrs. John Brine, William Anderson, and James Fall, three ministers who owed their conversion to his ministry.—A Funeral Sermon for Rev. Samuel Wilson, of London, 1750.

Mrs. Elizabeth Gill, the wife of the doctor, died October 10, 1764, in the sixty-eighth year of her age. The good man could not appear in public after the decease of his beloved wife until the 21st of the same month, when he preached a funeral sermon from Heb. xi. 16. The only allusion to the event is in the last paragraph :—"What has been said may serve to wean us from this world, and draw off our hearts from it, and all things in it; since this is not our rest, our house, our home, our native place ; that is in another country: and this may be of use to quicken our desire after another world, to seek a better country, and look for it; and this may also point out the happiness of those who are gone before us ; they are in this better country, and are in better company. But I forbear saying any more."

Subjoined to the sermon is a note. "The following character was wrote by the Doctor, and found among his papers, though not delivered from the pulpit.—'It pleased God to call her by his grace in the early time of life, and in a place of great darkness and ignorance, when there were scarce any or few professors of religion ; so that when she took up a profession of it, she appeared very singular, and became the object of the scoffs and jeers of her neighbours and former acquaintances; but this did not deter her from pursuing the good ways

of God she had entered into, and from persisting in them. She soon drank in the doctrines of the free grace of God in the salvation of men by Christ, of which she had a comfortable experience.

'In the after time of her life, her afflictions and troubles were many; but under all she was favoured with Divine supports, and was frequently indulged with gracious words of promise on different occasions, and yet after doubting and fearing: for none could have meaner and more humble thoughts of themselves than she always had, looking upon herself as *less than the least of all saints.*

'Lord's-days were usually delightful to her; she often met with refreshings from the presence of God in them, which made her earnestly desire the return of them; and when the day drew nigh, longing till the morning was, and the time came to attend public worship. The loss of these precious opportunities, through her long confinement, was greatly lamented by her.

'She was one that truly feared God, and was desirous of having a conscience void of offence both towards God and man, and of doing her duty to both; careful, as much as in her lay, to give no offence by word or deed, to the world or to the church of God; studying the things which make for peace among all with whom she was concerned; as her whole deportment, for the space of between forty and fifty years, has abundantly shewn, of which many here are witnesses.

'Her last affliction, though long, tedious, and painful, was borne with the greatest patience; that passage of scripture was truly verified in her, *Tribulation works patience;* and though she was not carried out, as her expression was, which she observed some were on their dying beds, in raptures of joy and strong expressions of faith, yet it pleased God to drop comfort into her soul at certain times; and sometimes she would be longing to be at home in her Father's house, saying, 'Let me

go; oh, let me go to my Father's house!' repeating it over and over again.

'The scripture which has now been discoursed on, was expressed by her as it had been at times before, with great, pleasure and delight; and also those words, *Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.* In a view of her own soul affairs, and those of her family, those words appeared to be of considerable use, and were quiet and comfortable to her, *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

'But a few Lord's-days ago, as her surviving relative was taking his leave of her, coming hither to preach, she expressed the following words with strong application to herself, *Having made peace through the blood of his cross;* and with the greatest vehemency and eagerness added, "And for me, too," and repeated it, "And for me, too."

'One morning, being asked how she did, she declared she had had much comfort that night, in her meditations on the sufferings of Christ for her, in comparison of which her afflictions, though heavy, were but light. At another time, those words were very staying, supporting, and satisfying to her, *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure;* and very often declared she had comfort, but had not strength to express it; and indeed the enemy of souls was kept off from her through the whole; and was not suffered, as far as could be discerned, to disturb and distress her in the least. The last words of any moment that were heard from her, were, when asked whether she had any comfort, she said she had, but not always alike; and added, *The covenant is sure:* quickly after this she grew delirious, and slept much, till death seized her; of which she seemed to be sensible by the motions of lifting up her hands, and by the words she uttered, which were "Lord! Lord!" when something followed not understood by those that stood by; and then drawing her breath quicker, immediately, without a sigh or groan, fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.'"

It is evident that the Doctor's feelings would not permit him to read this account of Mrs. Gill. A similar instance occurred when he preached a sermon for a beloved daughter, June 4, 1738. She died at the age of twelve years, May 30 : and appended to the funeral sermon, founded upon 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, is "An Account of some choice Experiences," &c.

In the account of this child is a paragraph which is selected for the information of those who think that the Baptists consider baptism as essential to salvation. The child had told her father, when on her death-bed, how often she had thought how delightful it would be to be baptized and partake of the Lord's Supper with the saints and people of God. "Being somewhat fearful," says Dr. Gill, "lest she should then labour under any discouragements, because she had not been baptized, nor had partook of the Lord's Supper, I told her, that though these are ordinances of Christ, and ought to be complied with, and submitted to by all that believe in Christ, who are proper subjects of them, and are satisfied of their right to them, as they have health and opportunity, yet *salvation does not depend upon them; persons may be saved without them, through the grace of Christ, who have not an opportunity of submitting to them.*"*

Among the friends of Dr. Gill, and in the church under his care, was an eminent christian, Mr. Edward Ludlow. His funeral sermon, from 2 Thess. xi. 16, was preached January 1, 1749, and is numbered xxvii. vol. i. p. 444. One extract will be sufficient to describe his character :—"The frame of his soul was generally spiritual and heavenly, and so habituated he was to spiritual things, and so much given to the contemplation of them, and meditation upon them, that in the midst of worldly business, and even upon the Exchange, when he met with a proper person, would at once enter into a christian conversation about such things which lay warm upon his heart, which

* Sermon xxiv. vol. i. p. 407.

he had been lately hearing or meditating upon, which shows the bias and bent of his mind." Dr. Gill calls him a solid saint! "If I may," said he to Dr. Gill, upon his death-bed, "but go out of the world with *a good hope through grace*, it will be more to me than all the exultations and joys some persons speak of: that is enough, I am content."

There was a Mr. John Davenport, a deacon of this church, for whom Dr. Gill preached and published a funeral sermon, October 15, 1754, from Job. xxxiii. 24. Speaking of his character the Doctor says, "It pleased God to call him by his grace and to reveal his Son in him, in his younger days; and as he knew it was his duty with *the mouth to make confession unto salvation*, as well as with *the heart to believe unto righteousness*, he very early gave himself up to this church of Jesus Christ, of which he was a member upwards of twenty-six years; and allowing for the common infirmities of life, his conversation, so far as known by us, was agreeable to the profession he made. I doubt not but he had that true faith which works by love to Christ and to his people; a crucified Christ was precious to him; his blood, and righteousness, and all that belongs to him; he loved him, his people, his gospel, and his ordinances: he was an humble Christian, tender and compassionate to the poor, to whom he behaved very respectfully both by words and deeds: he had a very mean opinion of himself, being very sensible of the corruption of his nature, and the plague of his heart, and of his deficiencies and imperfections in life: to this was owing the great reluctance with which he accepted the office of a deacon, as many of you well know, and for the same reason chose to officiate in it only when pure necessity obliged him to it. In a visit to him, in his late illness, which issued in death, he told me he had some delightful views of eternal things, and of his interest in them; and added, he should be very ungrateful if he did not believe that Christ shed his blood for him: that passage of Scripture being mentioned

in conversation, *Oh Israel thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help*; he observed that these words had been of wonderful use to him at a certain time, and had yielded him abundance of spiritual consolation and strength; as indeed, in a few words are expressed the destruction and salvation, the ruin and recovery of man. And though his disorder increasing rendered him afterwards very little conversible, yet, by broken expressions and various tokens and circumstances, he was judged to die comfortably; and no doubt has fallen asleep in Jesus, and is one of those that he will bring with him."

Mr. Davenport was one of the messengers from the church to the Baptist Fund. He left a family whom, at the close of sermon, Dr. Gill thus addressed:—"May you, his children that survive him, tread in his steps, and imitate him in every thing praise-worthy, civil, moral, and religious; attend the means of grace, and may the Lord call you by it, in due time, that you may fear and serve your father's God, and fill up his place in the world and the church."

This address presents a fair specimen of the way in which this eminently good man preached the gospel to the unconverted. Here are no alarming appeals to the conscience, as when our Lord said, *Except ye repent ye shall perish.* Here are no expostulations to urge them to serious consideration of the danger of sin, and unbelief, as when Paul declared, *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,* &c.—*knowing, therefore the terrors the Lord we persuade men:*—no *beseeching them in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God,* from the consideration of the sufficiency of the atonement and righteousness of Christ for the salvation and justification of all who believe in the name of Jesus:—no warnings of the awful doom of those who in addition to being ignorant of God, refused to *obey the gospel of Jesus Christ:*—no exhortation to *flee from the wrath to come,* by flying *for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them:*—no direction to pray for pardon, for grace, and mercy, through the

mediation of Jesus; but they are merely told in reference to seeking their eternal salvation, "Attend the means of grace, and may the Lord call you by it in due time." Is this preaching Christ *the hope of glory*, as Paul did? *warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to his power which worketh in me mightily?* Col. i. 28, 29.

CHURCH AT MAZE-POND.

MAZE-POND, and the surrounding neighbourhood, were, in former times, occupied by a palace belonging to the Abbots of Battle. It was their city mansion, to which they used to resort when they attended their duty in Parliament. These Abbots maintained a bridge called "Battle Bridge," lying over a water-course that passed through their grounds into the river Thames. The name is still preserved in Battle-stairs. The several streets since raised upon this estate, which bear the name of the Mazes, or Maëses, were so called from the luxuriant windings and intricacies in the magnificent gardens of those mitred priests and destructive locusts.

Several Baptist congregations existed at this part of Southwark at an early period of our history. There was a meeting-house at the "New Way in the Maze," which is mentioned in Maitland's History of London, in 1738, as a Baptist place. A Mr. Warburton, who preached near Tooley-street, in 1695, was probably at this place. He was living in September, 1708: and in 1711, there was a Mr. Warren who had succeeded him.

The church now known as the Maze-pond church, assembled originally in an old wooden building in Flower-de-luce-court.

The people had separated from the church in Goat-street, under the care of Mr. Benjamin Keach, on account of singing the praises of God in public worship: the particulars of this affair have been given in our work, vol. ii. p. 431.

It is supposed that Mr. Samuel Mee, their first pastor, died about 1702, and that he was succeeded by that eminently useful minister Mr. Edward Wallin. He was about twenty-five years of age when he became the pastor of the church, and served it faithfully, and with considerable success, during a period of nearly thirty years. He had the honour of having descended from parents, who, in the persecuting times before the Revolution, took joyfully the spoiling of their goods for the cause of Christ. The losses to which they had been subject on account of their religious profession by fines and imprisonment, prevented them from giving their son, who soon evinced considerable genius, that learning which his capacity demanded. The religious instructions which he received from his godly parents were the means, through a divine blessing, of leading him in early life to put on the Lord Jesus Christ by baptism.

Having united himself to a church of Christ, and being desirous if it should appear to be the Lord's will, to engage in the work of the ministry, he set himself indefatigably to study the Scriptures, and the oriental languges; whereby it was discovered that he aspired at an higher employment than trade, for which he was designed by his parents, and in which he was engaged.

When he began preaching the gospel, is not known, but that he engaged in it, with disinterested views, and not from mean, mercenary, or worldly considerations, is very evident from the circumstance that two congregations having given him a call at the same time, he chose to accept that of the poorer and meaner congregation, beeause he believed it to be the will of God concerning him, and that his work lay there; and this notwithstanding he had at the time a young and increasing family, and was under very pressing necessities.

At the time he settled at Maze-pond the church was in a low estate as to numbers, and its circumstances were very discouraging. Not being able to procure Mr. Wallin a sufficient support, he attended laboriously to the care of a school to provide for his family, which was often in great straits ; but the Lord was pleased to appear for them in an uncommon manner. "How often," says Dr. Gill, "have I, with others of my brethren here present, heard him relate, with the utmost pleasure and gratitude of mind, the instances of providential goodness to him, with a single view to glorify God, and to encourage the faith and hope of others in him."

It is recorded also, to the honour of Mr. Wallin, that "though he had temptations thrown in his way to leave his small flock, he bravely resisted them, and cheerfully continued in his oversight of it."

As it might be expected, so we are informed that the blessing of God attended his faithful labours, and that his success in the ministry was very great, in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints. In the funeral sermon preached for him, by Dr. Gill, he says, "There needs no further proof and demonstration of this, than the bare consideration of the low estate in which this church was when he came among you, and the very flourishing state in which he has now left you."

It is mentioned, to the honour of this worthy minister, that his large acquaintance with men and things, together with a great sagacity and penetration, joined with labour in which he took pleasure, gave him an uncommon turn for business. The following exclamation from such an honest great man as Dr. Gill, is one of the highest eulogies which could have been pronounced upon the useful character of Mr. Wallin ;—"How many will miss him for his private advice and counsels ! What a loss will the churches in city and country sustain, who had a common share in his care and affection ! And how long has he

been a father and a guide to you, my brethren, and myself! Have we not reason to cry, as the prophet did, *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!*"

Whilst, however, Mr. Wallin manifested great concern for the public good of the churches of Christ in general, he did not neglect to manifest affectionate regard to the church under his pastoral care. This, of all the branches of the Redeemer's interest, lay nearest his heart; and here he spent his time, his talents, and his strength. This was especially manifested at some periods of trial and difficulty which he had experienced in connection with the church. In a manuscript found after his death, these sentiments were expressed;—"Oh! that my present tears might cement the hearts of my dear members together in love, and that there might be no other contention among them, than what might express their self-denial for the sake of Christ, and as fellow-members striving together for the faith of the gospel, but not with one another about different sentiments in matters not essential to true religion, or to the public worship of God under the gospel.* Oh! imitate a dear Redeemer in this self-denying, loving, and tender spirit and carriage one towards another: this will produce peace in the church; this will yield peace in your own souls; this will yield a comfortable reflection in the near views of death and an eternal world."

It appears that he had been exercised with many afflictive providences, and had always manifested great resignation to the divine will. His last illness was for several months; and when he was first seized, considering that he had received "the sentence of death," he wrote the following sentiments in his diary:—"And now, methinks, I am ready to yield up my soul into the hands of a dear Jesus, in whom alone I have hope, and with whom I long to be. I have been a wonderful instance

* Doubtless referring to the subject of singing in public.

of his grace, and indeed of sovereign goodness, in that he should put such an one as I into the ministry, and uphold me so long in it, to some usefulness to poor souls, whom I hope to meet in the great day with exceeding joy."

The following statement by Dr. Gill will be read with interest, as it affords proof, that *the end of the upright man is peace!*

"During his long indisposition he was very comfortable in his soul, and satisfied about his eternal state. In my last visit to him, that he was able in any tolerable manner, with any degree of strength to converse with me, I asked him whether his faith in Christ was now steady; he replied, 'Steady, steady on the person of Christ, and those glorious truths of the gospel, which have been the support of my soul, and the delight of my ministry.' One of the last things he was heard to say before his death was, that the present dispensation was the most delightful one he ever yet was under; which shews, that he must have had great supports, and large discoveries of love in his last moments. And thus he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, and now makes one of the shining crowd which stand before the throne, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. May we be able to make a right use of this melancholy providence: should not the removal of such able and faithful servants of Christ send us to the throne of grace, to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, that his churches may be supplied, and his interest preserved?"

In describing the character of Mr. Wallin, Dr. Gill says, "His indefatigableness was very considerable, as appears from the progress he made in some of the learned languages, and in other parts of useful knowledge, which recommended him to the pulpit, and the press, and to every branch of conversation.

"His ministerial endowments and qualifications were such, as are rare in this present age. Besides a large experience of the grace of God, he had a considerable share of light and

knowledge in the great truths of the gospel, he had an heavenly skill to lay open the wretched and miserable state and condition of sinners by nature, and to set forth the glory of Christ in his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice. His language was plain and easy, though strong and masculine, far above contempt, and yet free from the swelling words of vain rhetoricians. His reasoning was clear and nervous, his mien and deportment were grave, his address was with majesty, which at once had a tendency to command awe, engage the attention, and strike the affection. And, let me not forget to take notice of his excellent talent in prayer, and of that sweet and near communion he often enjoyed with God in the discharge of that work in private.

"His conversation with men was free and pleasant, affable and courteous, instructive and diverting, which made him universally esteemed and beloved.

"Notwithstanding all his attainments, gifts, and usefulness, he was humble, and entertained mean and low thoughts of himself; this might be seen in his carriage to those who were inferior to him. In a manuscript written by himself, I meet with some lines, breathing out his sense of divine grace and his own unworthiness: 'Oh! says he, how unworthy have I always been of such dear favours with which I have been indulged. I can say, in the views of many infirmities, I have obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful in the ministry to the best of my light. Oh! that I had but more light, and liberty, in my Lord's work, in every respect. Alas! how short have I come of filling up the character I have unworthily bore in the churches.'"

Mr. Wallin died June 12, 1733, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. He published two sermons only, one on the death of the Rev. John Noble, the other on the death of Mrs. Mary Weare. His last, a second edition of which was published, was dedicated "To Mrs. Catharine Jocelyn, daughter of Sir Strange

Jocelyn, Bart. of Hyde-hall, in the County of Hertford, (who with others hath occasioned this publication,) this plain discourse is humbly offered by, Madam, your sincere friend and servant, Edward Wallin." The text is Isa. liv. 5;—*For thy Maker is thy husband*, &c.

It is pleasing to perceive another proof of "love and unity among Calvinists differing in opinion from each other." In preaching a funeral sermon for Mr. Wallin, and speaking in such high terms of his character and usefulness, Dr. Gill has set an example that it would be lovely and of good report if some of his disciples would imitate. Mr. Crosby, who well knew Mr. Wallin, and the superior eminence of his character, was much offended at a phrase used by Dr. Gill, viz. that "he had a considerable share of light and knowledge in the great things of the gospel." Mr. Crosby says, "But why does Mr. Gill allow him but a *considerable share* of light and knowledge in the great truths of the gospel? It is true, he was a man of great moderation, though of them who profess the Calvinist scheme of religion, and did not run into those flights of justification before faith, and of good works in no sense being necessary to salvation; but with the English Baptists in general, held that none can be said to be actually reconciled, justified, or adopted, until they are really implanted into Jesus Christ by faith; and accordingly, in his discourses, did well distinguish betwixt justification and sanctification, exalting the imputed righteousness of Christ without undervaluing the work of the Spirit. Neither do I know, though I was intimately acquainted with him many years, that he ever, publicly or privately, boasted of his learning or knowledge; a thing indeed frequently practised by such as have but a considerable or little share of them; and therefore I must take the liberty, as well as many others, to dissent from Mr. Gill on this head, and believe Mr. Wallin to have been endued with a *large* share of knowledge in the great things of the gospel."

There is probably a portion of asperity running through the above remarks; but they are introduced to shew that Dr. Gill thought it no reason for despising Mr. Wallin, because he did not believe in the doctrine of eternal actual justification before faith; while the statement of Mr. Crosby goes to prove, that the great body of English Baptists had never been of that opinion till it was introduced and maintained by Messrs. Skepp and Brine, and Dr. Gill.

During Mr. Wallin's ministry, the meeting-house in Maze-pond was built, and opened a few years before his death. It is a good building, and has a large burying-ground behind it, where great numbers of persons of the Baptist denomination in Southwark have been interred. In that place Mr. Wallin was buried; where, upon a stone against the wall of the meeting-house, is this inscription:—

In this vault are deposited
The remains of
The Reverend Mr. EDWARD WALLIN,
Who departed this life
June the 12th, 1733, aged 55.
His singular natural accomplishments,
Joined to a personal acquaintance with mankind,
Were greatly improved
By his experience as a Christian,
And his abilities as a divine.
So that
When we consider the vivacity of his wit,
The penetration of his judgment,
The compass of his knowledge,
The force of his reasoning,
And the facility of his address,
It is doubtful whether he was more to be admired
In civil or religious life.
His conversation was pleasant and instructive,
His advice generous and faithful,
His sermons judicious and affectionate;

He was a great blessing to the church
of which he was pastor,
A father to several in the ministry,
Who grew up under his influence,
And an happy instrument of the glory of God,
Both in the city and the country.

In this vault are also interred
The remains of
Mrs. SARAH WALLIN,
Wife of Mr. BENJAMIN WALLIN,
Who departed this life Feb. 29, 1752,
In the 42nd year of her age.
And likewise Five of their Children.

There were three ministers who rendered occasional assistance to Mr. Wallin; these were Messrs. Samuel Ring, John Townsend, and Aaron Spurrier.

Mr. Wallin is said to have been "a father to several in the ministry." Mr. Samuel Wilson was called to the ministry by the church about 1724, and Mr. Sayer Rhudd in 1725.

Mr. Wallin was a member of the Society at the Coffee-house from 1723 until his death. His removal was greatly lamented by them, and was one of those removals of worthy and able ministers which led to an extraordinary meeting of prayer of the associated churches at Devonshire-square meeting, May 24, 1734.

The church belonged to the Baptist Fund from its commencement, and has been very liberal in its contributions towards it. There is an engraving of Mr. Wallin by Wynde, mentioned by Noble; a copy of this is in the possession of Mr. Benjamin Coxhead.

After the death of Mr. Wallin, Mr. SAYER RHUDD, a Doctor of Medicine, was invited to preach there with a view to succeed in the pastoral office. He had been formerly a member of the church, and had been called to the ministry by them. He first settled as a minister at Glass-house-street,

Westminster, and removing from thence in 1725, he took the charge of a congregation at Turners'-hall, in Philpot-lane. He afterwards, with the people of that place, united with the church in Devonshire-square in 1727, as has been already stated. While he was delivering his probationary sermons at Maze-pond, the people suspecting the soundness of his principles, requested him to preach on the doctrine of the Trinity. Mr. Rhudd very frankly delivered his sentiments in a sermon from 1 Tim. ii. 5; *There is one God, and one Mediator,* &c. In this sermon he avowed some opinions from which the people discovered that his sentiments were unsound on that fundamental doctrine, and he was accordingly rejected on account of Unitarian sentiments. A few of the people, however, adhered to him, and amongst the rest a Mrs. Ginn, who enabled Mr. Rhudd to erect a new place in Snow's-fields. We shall have occasion to notice Mr. Rhudd again.

Mr. Abraham West was the next pastor of the church. This young minister was a member of the church in Little Wild-street during the time of Dr. Gifford; and was called to exercise his gifts with a view to the ministry in May 1734. Having been heard with great approbation, the church resolved, July 14, 1734, "that he be authorized to preach whenever the providence of God shall call and give him an opportunity."

In the October following, it was proposed to consider whether he should be invited to assist Mr. Gifford in that church; and at a subsequent church meeting, Nov. 17, 1734, the pastor declared "he was willing to commit the affair relating to brother West to the conduct and determination of the church, in order to give the best proof he can of his sincerity, and of his having no sinister end in view." The affair was to have been debated on that day three weeks, and the whole church was to have notice given them respecting it. At that meeting, Dec. 8, 1734, the decision was, "that brother West be not chosen as an assistant for one part of the Lord's day."

It is probable he, from this time, supplied the church in Maze-pond, as it appears from a minute entered in the records of Little Wild-street, May 1, 1735, "A. Gifford, chairman:—Three messengers from Mr. Wallin's church, acquainted the church with brother West's desire to be dismissed to that church; and brother West also in person acquainting the church that they spoke his mind, it was agreed that he be dismissed accordingly."

Mr. West was ordained at Maze-pond, sometime in 1736. In the acceptance of this office, he made it a condition that singing should be introduced into public worship. He was a very promising minister, but as *he came up*, so he was *cut down like a flower*. He died March 27, 1739, aged 27 years. A plain flat stone, behind the meeting-house, has the following short inscription.

In memory
Of Mr. Abraham West,
Pastor of this Church,
Who departed this life
March 27th, 1739,
Aged 27 years.

In the account read by Mr. Benjamin Wallin at his own ordination over this church, speaking of the death of his father, the Rev. Edward Wallin, Mr. West is thus very respectfully noticed. "We went on for some time in a very declining way, one stake being pulled up after another, till we were led to the choice of our late honoured pastor, Mr. Abraham West; through whom a beam of light seemed to break forth upon us in a promising manner; but our forward hopes were nipped in the bud: this ray soon crept under a cloud, which was followed by the removal of our dear friend into a land of darkness."

I find that Mr. West was introduced to the Society at the Coffee-house, July 16, 1734, by Dr. Gifford, immediately after

he had received the call of the church. His name was returned as a minister of the general body of Dissenting ministers, Feb. 28, 1737-8. He does not appear to have attended with the ministers after this. I know nothing more of him, excepting from one line in Mr. Benjamin Wallin's funeral sermon, in which Dr. Samuel Stennett calls Mr. Abraham West, "a promising young person."

The church was not long destitute, as they found in the son of their former pastor, Mr. Edward Wallin, an acceptable and judicious minister. Mr. BENJAMIN WALLIN was born in London, in the year 1711, and from an accident which happened to him while an infant at nurse an incurrable lameness was contracted; but at fourteen years of age, through the skill of Mr. Jonas Thoroughgood, a baptist minister in Herefordshire, he was so far recovered as to be able to walk in a much more comfortable manner than before. Though this youth was trained up in the way he should go, and, as he states, had the advantage of hearing the word of God from his infancy, under the ministry of his excellent father; yet he adds, "Under his judicious and affectionate instructions, both as a parent and a minister, I continued a long time a melancholy instance of the insufficiency of the best of means without a special blessing: but I trust before his merciful removal, it pleased God, who is rich in mercy, to open the eyes of my understanding, and to change what was before only the form to the power of godliness."* Mr. Wallin received the rudiments of a good education, under the Rev. John Needham of Hitchin, and was afterwards under considerable obligations to Dr. Sayer Rhudd, and more especially to that eminently evangelical minister, Dr. Joseph Stennett, from whose instructions and counsels he received much useful knowledge, which insensibly prepared him for an office,

* Dedication to his "Christian Life," &c. 1746.

which, at that time, he had no intention or prospect of filling, a station in the Church of God.

Mr. Wallin was baptized by his honoured father, and joined the church in Maze-pond. Alluding to this, he says, in his address to the church, "I made a free choice of you, as the temple where I would pay my vows, and offer up the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, as well as seek my future spiritual improvement.*"

When Mr. Wallin was in his twenty-first year, about 1732, and whilst he was an apprentice, the year before his father's death, some of the members of the church proposed that he should be encouraged to exercise his gifts for the work of the ministry, but, on account of some interposing difficulties, the design was abandoned until several years afterwards.

Mr. Wallin having no thought of entering upon the ministry, engaged in business, and entered into the marriage relation. Still there were those among his friends, who thought he ought not to abandon the design. In May 1734, two deacons, Mr. John Manypenny and Mr. John Williams, conversed with him seriously on the subject. They informed him that, in their opinion, he had a gift for public usefulness, and that he had acknowledged a church of Christ had power to make trial of those they considered as having promising gifts; and therefore it was their firm intention to propose to the church in Maze-pond, to call him to speak before them. As, however, they would not proceed to that measure without Mr. Wallin's consent, and he having in a respectful, serious, and sensible manner, offered reasons why he thought he ought not to give up his business for the public ministry, the matter was again dropped.

On November 6, 1739, after the death of Mr. West, three deacons of the church, Messrs. George Ring, Edward Tom-

* Dedication to his "Christian Life," &c. 1746.

kins, and Thomas Cox, acquainted Mr. Wallin, that they were appointed to inform him that the church apprehended he had a gift for public service, and that they had unanimously given him a call to exercise before them the next church meeting.

This communication was so entirely unexpected, that Mr. Wallin was quite unprepared to comply with their request: and in a letter addressed to the church, December 3, 1739, he says, "When I consider the design of such a call, which at least must be if I am approved of, to be employed more or less in preaching the gospel; the very thought strikes me with terror: to address the judgments and consciences of men, on subjects revealed from heaven of the most lasting importance to their precious and immortal souls, is a work of so awful a nature, that an inspired apostle, with all the greatest natural, acquired, and miraculous gifts, thought himself insufficient for it. It is no wonder then that one void of almost every qualification should think it presumption to touch the sacred service," &c.

Mr. Wallin urged also the difficulty he should have to relinquish his business, and his fears lest he should, by not providing for his own house, bring a reproach upon the gospel; he promised however, to take the matter into consideration, and thus piously concludes his letter: "I may say as the apostle in another case, *God is my record how greatly I long after* our being fixed with a sound and able minister, whose soul may yearn after us in the bowels of Jesus Christ; and through whose prayers and instructions, under the divine blessing, *our love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;* and that we may *approve things that are excellent, and be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.*"

Mr. Wallin had asked the advice of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Joseph Stennett, upon receiving the message of the church: the following letter was sent to that worthy minister, enclosing that which Mr. Wallin had prepared as an answer to the

church, and from which some extracts have been already given.

This letter lays open the state of Mr. Wallin's mind, and affords evidence of the prudence of wisdom by which he governed his affairs.

"To the Rev. Mr. Joseph Stennett, Sen.

Rev. Sir,

"You will readily believe the concern of my mind has been very great since I saw you last: such have been the calls of my own private business, and my public office in the parish, I have not been able to come at so much time in private together, as you recommended and I desired. But no time has past without some thought of the important affair, nor have I been without several seasons wherein I have solemnly addressed the throne of grace.

"The main point with me is, whether it is probable I can be more useful in the station proposed to me, than that in which I at present stand? So many are those qualifications, necessary to the honourable discharge of that work, which I am destitute of, and so much do the credit of religion and peace of my own conscience depend upon such a discharge of it, if I enter upon it; that the deep sense I have of my own inability and unworthiness, will not suffer me to entertain a hope sufficient to encourage me. If the Lord is descending to me in this way, *He makes the clouds his chariots.* Did I but know his will, my heart deceives me if I am not ready to obey it. But so many instances of unfaithfulness have I to charge myself with in my private station, that sure I cannot think I can be *counted faithful and put into the ministry!*

"I have written something as an answer to the church's message, in which you may see more of my thoughts: please to return it before Monday, that being the day they are to meet.

"I doubt not but I have an interest in your thoughts and prayers, and subscribe myself your unworthy relation in the best bonds, B. W.

London, November 28. 1739."

The church were willing to wait, till Mr. Wallin was relieved from a public station which he filled in the parish; but before that period arrived, a sermon having been preached by Mr. Benjamin Beddome, a deacon who was unfriendly to Mr. Wallin's being brought into the pastoral office, without having even consulted his brethren in office or the church, stopped the members after the sermon, and proposed Mr. Beddome as a suitable person for the pastoral office; this however turned out to the mortification of this Diotrephes; for no one seconding the motion, the matter dropped of course.

On the business of speaking before the church being again urged upon Mr. Wallin, and there being great cause to apprehend a division if he did not comply, he again consulted his friend, Mr. Joseph Stennett. The following extract from the answer given by that worthy minister, is worthy of being preserved.

"As for your humble, broken, timorous frame, with all the circumstances which have tended to promote such a temper of mind, I apprehend it is that preparation of heart which is from the Lord. Conscience testifies for you, my brother, that you are not seeking your own things: you have the regular call of God's people; and without a trial, how will you know whether it is the call of God or no? Take courage, dear sir, and put your trust in him, and he will, I trust, strengthen your heart and guide you in the way in which you ought to go."

Mr. Wallin accordingly exercised his gifts, by speaking before the church, on July 6, 1740. After this he felt such discouragement that he wrote to the church, requesting they would not urge him to continue speaking before them. To this

letter a friendly and sensible reply was returned by one of the deacons, who appears to have suspected that the principal cause why Mr. Wallin was discouraged, was the opposition which some few of the members made to him. He says, "Our brethren and sisters, in the opposition, have nothing to urge as a sufficient objection to your conduct either in the world or in the church, neither have they any just plea against your abilities: and if I may be allowed to guess the reason they act thus, it is because they would not have a lay teacher, and daub over their true sentiments with the untempered mortar, of fear and trembling about the hurt that may accrue to your family, and the peace and prosperity of the church!" In another letter from this worthy deacon, dated September 19, 1740, he produces a number of arguments from Scripture, and from authors, and the practice of our churches, to shew the right the church had to call a gifted brother to the pastor's office, and still strongly urges Mr. Wallin to a compliance with their call.

Fearing to trust his own opinion, which was that he ought to decline all thoughts of the ministry, Mr. Wallin, October 30, 1740, addressed a letter to four eminent Baptist ministers, requesting their advice, and was encouraged by them to comply with the call of the church: these were the Rev. Messrs. Gill, Stennett, Wilson, and Brine.

After numerous difficulties, arising principally from mental exercises, Mr. Wallin engaged publicly in the work of preaching the gospel on Nov. 9, 1740, from 2 Cor. ii. 16. *Who is sufficient for these things?* He was afterwards invited on June 8, 1741, to preach twice a day, for a month or two, as a probationer for the pastoral office. On July 9, the church resolved to call him to the work, and at the request of Mr. Wallin, a solemn season of prayer, on July 15, was held on his behalf. The ordination service was conducted in the following manner, as detailed in Mr. Wallin's manuscripts.

"Thursday October 15, 1741, I was publicly and solemnly

invested with the office of pastor, after the church had given the assembly an account, by brother Tomkins, of the call of the church, and the motives inducing thereunto, and I had solemnly recognized my acceptance thereof.

"Mr. Thomas Flower began in prayer. Mr. John Gill ordained.* Mr. Dawkes proceeded immediately after ordination. Mr. Samuel Wilson gave the exhortation from 2 Cor. ii. 16. Mr. Brine prayed after Mr. Wilson had finished; then Mr. Gill preached to the people from Heb. xiii. 18; and Mr. Edmund Townsend concluded: the solemnity lasted from half past ten to three-quarters past two. N. B. Some members met to pray by eight o'clock in the morning."†

Mr. Wallin was enabled, notwithstanding all his fears, to fill up this important station with great respectability for upwards of forty years. In 1752 he was deprived of his wife, who was interred in the same grave with his honoured father: and on

* Probably by pronouncing the words of ordination similar to those mentioned at the ordination of Mr. Joseph Burroughs. See p. 149.

† Mr. Wallin has preserved among his manuscripts the following account of his being received a member of the Society of Ministers:—

"Memº. Friday, Nov. 18, 1740: admitted a member of the Board of Ministers. Mr. John Brine in the chair, who addressed me as follows;—'Mr. Wallin, with the greatest satisfaction we hear you are called by the church to which you belong, to the important work of preaching the gospel: I am to acquaint you this Board freely admits you a member; hoping God will be with you, and succeed you in the work to which HE called you.'

"There were present, beside the Chairman,

MR. GEO. BRAITHWAITE,
—— JOSEPH STENNETT, sen.
—— JOSEPH STENNETT, jun.
—— THOMAS FLOWER,
—— WILLIAM ANDERSON,
—— WILLIAM MORETON,
MR. EDMUND TOWNSEND,
—— ——— TEMPLEMAN,
—— SAMUEL DEW,
—— DANIEL WHITE, and
—— JOHN TOWNSEND."

the 19th of February, 1782, at the age of seventy-one years, he finished his course with joy. His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stennett, from Matt. xxv. 23. *Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* This was printed with the title, "The faithful Minister rewarded." Mr. Booth's address at the interment is appended to the sermon. Both of these discourses were published at the request of the church.

From Dr. Stennett's sermon the following account of Mr. Wallin's character and labours is extracted :—

"Mr. Benjamin Wallin was the son of Mr. Edward Wallin, who was an excellent man, and for many years a worthy pastor of this church. On his decease, Mr. Abraham West, a promising young person, was chosen to that office. He dying, our dear departed friend, after the interval of about seven years from his father's death, was invited to accept the charge. It was with no small reluctance, the effect of self-diffidence and a deep sense of the importance of the work, he complied. My dear and honoured father was the principal instrument, under God, of removing his difficulties, and of assisting him in his preparations for this service; which he often acknowledged with great affection and gratitude. And there are those yet living who can testify what serious regard he paid to the voice of God in this matter. Nor should I forget to observe here, that in his last illness he assured me, with pleasing satisfaction, that, upon the fairest examination he was capable of making into the principles and views with which he first entered on a profession of religion, and afterwards engaged in the work of the ministry, he had the sentence of his mind and conscience in his favour.

"Thus setting out in the service of his divine Master, he pursued the great objects of his ministry with faithfulness, diligence, and success. An habitual reverence he had of God upon his spirit, particularly in prayer. The voice of providence he attentively regarded in the various incidents of his life. To

the gospel of Christ, as a scheme adapted to magnify both the justice and the grace of God, and to restore men to his likeness as well as his favour, he steadily adhered. In explaining the doctrines, and recommending the institutions of primitive Christianity, he paid a very particular regard to the Scriptures, often observing how much it is the duty of ministers, like the apostles, to reason out of the word of God. So that his preaching was methodical, scriptural, and practical. He was happy, too, in accommodating his subjects to public occasions, having the great object of doing good ever in view. He laboured to get at the consciences of his hearers, to rouse the impenitent, to direct the inquiring, to comfort the distressed, to animate the slothful, and to edify the faithful. And it pleased God to succeed his labours, in not a few instances, to the great joy of his heart. Many of you, my friends, if not all, may be said to be his spiritual children. And as such he tenderly loved you. Your interests, in your individual and collective capacities, lay near his heart. He sympathized with you in your sorrows, and rejoiced with you in your joys, both on a spiritual and temporal account. Your attention to the social duties of religion, to which he earnestly pressed you, gave him no small pleasure. Never was he so happy as when presiding among you, on stated or occasional meetings of the church. And with particular satisfaction he mentioned to me, in his last illness, your having so many of you met together to offer prayer to God on his account.

"Nor were his labours for the glory of God, and the good of men, confined to this community. He was glad of every opportunity to promote the interests of other churches, and the cause of religion in general, by his counsels and occasional services. He was a man of a public spirit. And, firmly attached as he was to the doctrines of the reformation, and to that particular denomination to which he belonged, he sincerely loved all good men wherever he met with them; and gave

proof of his cordial regard to the interests of religious liberty, by using his endeavours, in concert with his brethren, to promote and enlarge it.* In short, it may be truly said of him, he was a good man, a steady friend, an experienced Christian, and an able and faithful minister of the gospel. He was not indeed without his infirmities, but these were of such a kind as quickly to recede from the view of those who knew him: and they who were intimately acquainted with him will ever retain a deep sense of his great worth.

"Forty years and a few months he spent, my friends, in your service. And how holily, justly, and unblameably he lived, you know, and indeed all who knew him will testify; for he maintained to the last a character honourable in the sight of all men. During this long term he was but rarely interrupted in his work by illness. Yet afflictions he did meet with, which he patiently endured, and the sanctified use of which he evidently experienced. And, as he was often used to say, it was in his heart to live and die with you, so his wish was gratified.

"His last illness was not protracted to a very great length; and whatever pains he suffered, many comforts were mingled with them. He was surrounded with friends who tenderly felt with him in his sorrows, as he had been used to feel with them in theirs. And what was his greatest mercy of all, he enjoyed sweet composure of mind, well satisfied as to his state towards God, and that he had built his hope on the right foundation. He knew whom he had believed, and was verily persuaded that he was able to keep what he had committed to him against the great day. The faithfulness of God, in particular, he frequently

* Mr. Wallin was one of the ministers who, in 1772, petitioned the legislature for relief in the matter of subscription to the articles of the Church of England.

spoke of, as a source whence he drew substantial consolation. His reason was continued to him very nearly to the close of life. And some of the last words he was heard to pronounce were—'Oh! pardon!—rejoicing!—I——.' Thus died this excellent man. And oh! how inconceivable must have been the pleasure his immortal spirit felt, when, as he passed the gates of the celestial city, he heard his master say, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!*"

Mr. Booth's address is characteristic of himself, and shews the great man even at that period of his life:—"On such an occasion as this, it is proper that we, who bear the ministerial character, should feel, with redoubled force, our obligations to diligence in the faithful discharge of that sacred trust which is reposed in us. Our great business is, as my brethren well know, to preach the gospel of God, and to watch for the souls of men. We are bound so to preach as to commend ourselves to the enlightened and impartial conscience; and so to watch, as those that must give an account of their whole conduct. To entertain and to please, are the design of an actor on the stage, not of a minister in his pulpit. Our parts and learning, our spiritual gifts and sacred office, answer the great end of the Christian ministry no further than they are means of promoting true virtue and real piety. Nor, in any other view, can the exercise of them afford peaceful reflections when we come to die. It is possible for us to gain the applause of a multitude, while the principles on which we act and the end at which we aim are detestable in the sight of God; and such as our consciences, if awake, must abhor in the near views of eternity. Of this our venerable deceased friend was well aware, as I learnt from frequent conversations with him."

Mr. Wallin was interred in the burial-ground behind the meeting-house, and the following inscription is on his tombstone:—

Sacred to the memory
of the
Rev. Benjamin Wallin, M. A.
A man
(Human frailty abated)
Exempt from all the faults,
And endowed with all the virtues,
Of a Christian minister.
By the unanimous desire of a free people,
He succeeded his father,
Edward Wallin,
As pastor of this church;
And,
By a diligent discharge of his office,
By a constant course of manly and social actions,
By a wise application of means to incidents,
For more than forty years,
Rendered a large congregation happy.
In the year 1782,
On February the 19th,
In the seventy-first year of his age,
His tranquil soul departed,
Happy in itself,
At peace with God,
And all mankind.

The following is a list of Mr. Wallin's works:—1. The Compassions of a dying Saviour on those who crucified him, 1746.—2. The Christian Life in divers of its branches described and recommended, in four parts, with a serious Exhortation to Prayer, 1746.—3. The Redeemer's Charge against his declining Churches, 1748.—4. An Exhortation against quenching the Spirit, 1748.—5. An humble Address to the Churches of Christ not to forsake their Assemblies, 1750.—6. Evangelical Hymns on various Views of the Christian Life, for the Closet, 1750.—7. Exhortations to Prayer and the Lord's Supper.—8. A Sermon at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Samuel Burford, Goodman's-fields, 1755.—9. Sermon at the Ordination of the

Rev. Mr. Walter Richards, Devonshire-square, 1762.—10. The Experience of the Saints with the Operations of the Holy Spirit explained and defended, 1763.—11. The Christian's Concern not to be a Cast-away; two Discourses on 1 Cor. ix. 27, 1765. —12. On the Decease of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, 1765.—13. The Eternal Existence of our Lord Jesus Christ considered and improved, 1766.—14. The Christian Salutation; a Farewel Sermon, 1766.—15. The Constitution of a Gospel Church; at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Reynolds, 1766.—16. Thirty-two Lectures on Primitive Christianity, 1768.—17. The Folly of neglecting Divine Institutions, 1758.—18. The Christian's Duty and Confidence in times of Public Calamity, occasioned by the late dreadful Earthquakes, and the apprehensions of a French War, 1756.—19. The joyful Sacrifice of a prosperous Nation; a Thanksgiving Sermon for Victory and Peace, 1759.—20. Funeral Sermon on the Death of Mr. E. Tomkins, 1753.—21. Ditto on the Death of Mr. Jonas Thorowgood, of Hertford, 1753.—22. Ditto on the Death of Mr. T. Wildman, 1754.—23. Ditto on the Decease of the Rev. Mr. John Author, of Waltham Abbey, 1762.—24. A Letter to the Congregation meeting near the Maze-pond, Southwark, 1755.—25. Charge at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Abraham Booth, Goodman's-fields, 1768.—26. Pious Memorial; three Sermons on three deceased worthy Professors.—27. Gospel Requisites to acceptable Prayer, 1770.—28. The Importance of Family Religion, 1771.—29. Scripture Doctrine of Christ's Sonship, 1771.—30. At the Grave of Dr. John Gill, 1772.— 31. Funeral Sermon on Mr. Job Heath, 1773.—32. Ditto on the Rev. Mr. Samuel James, of Hitching, 1773.—33. Sermon on the Settling a new Church, 1774.—34. On the Death of Miss Macgowan, 1774.—35. Memoirs of a young Gentleman for the Warning of Deists, 1774.—36. The popular Concern in the Choice of Representatives, 1774.—37. Case of a fallen Professor, 1775.—38. Discourses on the Prodigal Son, 1775.—39. The

ancient Believer's Transition from Mortality to Life; on the Decease of Mrs. Hannah Murn.—40. Satan rebuked and the Son defended, 1781.—41. Sermon on the Decease of the Rev. Mr. John Macgowan.

A deacon of excellent character in this church was Mr. Job Heath, who died Jan. 24, 1773, in the fifty-second year of his age. His father, who was an honourable member of the same church, had died in an old age in the year 1757.

Mr. Benjamin Wallin published a funeral sermon for Mr. Heath, which is entitled, "The Blessedness of the Man whom the Lord shall find diligent in his Station;" founded upon Matt. xxiv. 46. In describing the character of his esteemed friend and brother, Mr. Wallin informs us, "It was his happiness to be early convinced of his condition as a sinner, and above all, that he soon obtained mercy to believe; having trusted in the Lord, though but a stripling, like David, he was not ashamed; nor would he delay to list himself openly under the Captain of his salvation. This was," he says, "soon after my entrance on the pastoral office, namely, Dec. 1741. After he was baptized, I conducted the youth to his place in the church, so that he was among the first-fruits of my labours in Christ."

Mr. Wallin speaks in terms of high commendation of his filial piety; for the circumstances of his ancient and venerable parents requiring his assistance, the first produce of the labour of his hands was applied in obedience to the first command with a promise,—*Honour thy father and thy mother.* This honour was continued and increased with his abilities to the end of their days.

Divine Providence so blessed the exercise of his talents in the occupation to which he was trained, that he soon became one of the most considerable of his calling in the metropolis; but in the midst of these prosperous days, and when about to enter on a still more advantageous situation, he was suddenly taken away by death. Prosperity, which often proves an occasion

for bringing forth the pride and wantonness of the heart, was not injurious to him. "I never saw," says Mr. Wallin, "nor ever heard of an instance in which he exulted on account of these extraordinary advantages in life; and may I not appeal to the world for his regularity, uprightness, and diligence in business?"

He was called to the deacon's office in 1753, which he undertook with great humility. "This office he was enabled to sustain nineteen years; an example of fidelity, condescension, and kindness: his decease is therefore a very great loss to the church, to the poor more especially, to our honoured brethren who co-operated with him in the same commission, and to no one more than your sympathizing minister."

He was diligent in his attendance upon public worship, though his habitation was distant; nor did he neglect the meetings for discipline. The last time he was at the meeting, he was apparently in good health; but a few days' acute illness terminated in his decease, during most part of which he was not conversible. "The day before his confinement," says Mr. Wallin, "having occasion to write me some lines, though in haste, and, as I apprehend, with his people about him as usual, yet among them are the following pithy and pious expressions: 'I bless God for the continuance of your life as a minister; the Lord is owning the same to my soul, for the growth of grace, and increase of love to the brethren. I know here is no abiding place; I find no solid satisfaction short of Christ Jesus my Lord; and there are times I can rejoice in finding every thing my soul stands in need of, not only for time, but eternity!' And after dropping some other things for the encouragement of his minister, which he was frequently doing, he proceeds in these striking words; 'I cannot conclude without telling you, I never saw more of the emptiness of this world, and all its delights and honours, than at this time, and count them all loss that I may win Christ.' Such was the frame of this precious man, when his unknown hour was at hand; so gracious was

the Lord to us in exciting him, in this occasional manner, to communicate the habitual stretch of his soul towards Jesus and heaven, in the midst of much worldly business." Mr. Wallin adds, "It is a great breach! A principal man is removed!"

This pious evangelical sermon is dedicated "To Mrs. Mary Heath, the relict of the deceased; to Messrs. Job, James, and Benjamin Heath, with their sister Elizabeth, his surviving children; and to the whole family and church who lament his departure."

His eldest son, Mr. Job Heath, still survives, and has been for many years a most honourable deacon of the same church.

Miss Elizabeth Heath died March 21, 1780, in the twenty-fifth year of her age. Mr. Wallin improved her death in a sermon from Job xxxiii. 24, and entitled it, "Deliverance from the Wrath to Come by the Ransom Price of a Mediator." Respecting this "amiable youth, who had been unexpectedly taken away," Mr. Wallin says, "The deceased was the only surviving daughter of a vigilant officer in this church, who was the first-fruit of my ministry among you. It was her mercy to be early led into the knowledge of her state as a fallen creature, and the salvation of God, it is highly probable some time before it was known to her most intimate relations and friends; partly owing to a natural reservedness, but principally to the modest low thoughts of herself visible on every occasion. Be that as it may, having fixed her hope in Christ, a sense of her duty, and a desire of glorifying her Redeemer, engaged her to a voluntary confession of his name. Upon this she joined communion in our church, in company with several other branches of a family who survive in the same fellowship, being a third generation from the beginning of its union with us in the Lord.

"During the short time of her continuance among us, which expired in less than three years, she steadfastly adhered to her profession, was constant and faithful in her place, in her de-

portment peaceable, and in all appearance increasing in love to the community, its ministry, and members, and also in a delight of the truth and order of the gospel. Some professing Christians are far from that pious behaviour at home which might be expected from their sacred profession and standing in the house of God; scarcely any thing to be seen or heard that savours of vital religion by those who are about them: not so the dear youth we mourn; those who were nearest her person are witnesses to her private conduct and devotion, that was habitually answerable to her character, which she bore in public: the closet and the sanctuary united in the witness they bore to her real piety and diligence in every appointed means of communion with God.

"It would be an ungrateful omission to pass over in silence the manner in which this young disciple was sustained on her dying bed. She was not a stranger to transitory glooms, and at one period more especially her pressure was very distressing: the prince of darkness seemed permitted sorely to beset her; but, strengthened by divine grace, she returned in a few hours in a kind of holy triumph, saying, with some degree of transport and joy, 'Now the enemy has done his worst. *The Lord is my light and my salvation: the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.*' From that time patience and fortitude reigned in her countenance; and through the whole of her remaining illness a serenity and courage which no other principle but that of the gospel can inspire.

"In my two last interviews with her, while she was encountering the sorrows of dying nature, I found her holding fast her Redeemer with solidity and comfort. On several accounts I could not but ardently wish it might be the pleasure of God to restore her. Among many instances of joy with which I have been indulged through the long course of my ministry, I never met with more substantial evidence of dying in faith, than what appeared in our dear departed young friend:

and we know that *blessed are the dead that die in the Lord. Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*"*

There is in Mr. Wallin's manuscripts a funeral sermon preached on occasion of the death of Mr. Benjamin Tomkins, who died March 4, 1767, aged 64. This worthy man, it appears, joined the church November 1722, in company with his brother, Mr. Edward Tomkins, who was also highly esteemed in the church, and who died in 1753. Mr. Benjamin Tomkins was called to the deacon's office in 1753, and filled it well. "There are many witnesses," says Mr. Wallin, "to his constancy and faithfulness both in a private and public capacity amongst us: the forward bloom of his profession did not, as in some melancholy instances, go off without fruit: through mercy his heart being established with grace, he set well, and became rooted and steadfast, insomuch that he maintained his original situation in Zion till the end of his days."

One instance of the excellency of Mr. Tomkins's character is thus given:—"His reverence for the Lord's day, and his becoming resolution not to break it, even when it was almost an universal custom in the trade to which he belonged, was highly commendable, and a just reproof on those professors who can allow themselves in a practice so unworthy the name of Christianity. It may please the Lord to try his own people in this way, for righteousness' sake, yet he will not forsake them: but our friend lost nothing by this self-denial for the sake of his conscience; his labours were crowned with success even far beyond many who openly and shamefully prostitute the Sabbath in pursuit of their worldly advantage."

As the life of this good man was holy and upright, so his

* This sermon was not printed, but is found among the manuscripts of Mr. Benjamin Wallin, a copy of which is in the possession of the writer.

death was happy and honourable. "Our dear friend," says Mr. Wallin, "after many long scenes of torture, went off without a sensible convulsion or groan, and thus slept in Jesus, and is numbered with them whom God will bring with him." Mr. Wallin, was succeeded by the Rev. James Dore, who is still living, though he has long been laid aside from his public work: the Church is at present under the care of the Rev. James Hoby, and is in a prosperous state.

CHURCH IN WHITE-STREET.

THE meeting-house at which this church assembled, was situate in Sheer's-alley, White-street, behind St. Georges's church. It is thought the place was built through the influence of Mr. Benjamin Keach, probably soon after the Revolution. The pastor in 1704, was Mr. Richard Parkes, who has been mentioned as united with Mr. Stinton, in raising the Maze-pond school, in 1714. The church received five pounds of Mr. Hollis's bounty, through Mr. Stinton, 1715. Mr. Parkes was among the non-subscribing ministers at the Salters'-hall synod, in 1719. He was one of the ministers who united in the society at the Coffee-house, in 1723, and attended the meeting till June 28, 1725. He probably died soon after: he was a minister of respectability and usefulness.

Mr. Joseph Harrington succeeded him, who died about 1741. After him was Mr. Russell. I find him, in July 1742, applying to the society of ministers for their advice how he might settle, in an orderly way, with the people late under the care of Mr. Harrington. A meeting to consist of two messengers, and the minister of each church, was appointed to consider the request. Mr. Russell afterwards applied to be admitted a member of the society, at the Coffee-house; but it was agreed that, "all the circumstances considered, he ought not to be ad-

mitted a member of this board; and further it is the advice of this board, that he do not continue the ministry, apprehending it will not be for the honour of religion." It was further agreed, that the church in White-street should be made acquainted with the reasons for this advice, and that they should be sent in a letter to Mr. Samuel Wilson, distiller, at Deptford, a member of the church. It should seem, however, that the church chose Mr. Russell, as he was pastor of this church it 1758, and died soon after. One of the members, a Mr. Davies, was afterwards called to fill the office of pastor; but the church being in a declining state he soon resigned, and it was dissolved about 1765. The meeting-house, after having been shut up for some time, was occupied as a brewer's warehouse. It has long since been pulled down, and some houses have been built upon the scite, that go by the name of Wilmot's Buildings. It is said there was a burying-ground belonging to the meeting-house. Not knowing the sentiments of Mr. Parkes's successors, we cannot ascertain how far his objecting to subscribe the declaration of his faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, in 1719, contributed to the decline and dissolution of this church: if, however, an objection to declare his faith in important doctrines, at a time when those doctrines were publicly impugned, led his people to undervalue their magnitude in the gospel system, they were gradually preparing to receive a sceptical and Socinian ministry; and this would enable us to account for the dissolution of the church in White-street, as has been the case in various other places, especially amongst the Presbyterian and General Baptists, where the people have departed from the Trinitarian doctrines professed by their forefathers.

It is evident also that the church had relaxed in discipline, and were so determined to exercise the right of choosing their own minister, that, in defiance of the advice of the pastors of the associated churches, they chose as a pastor a man whom they

had recommended to discontinue the public ministry. If churches will act so obstinately as to refuse all counsel, and so wickedly as to pay no regard to the honour of the gospel, they will necessarily be diminished and brought low. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?* Matt. vii. 16.

CHURCH IN SNOW'S-FIELDS.

THIS meeting-house is mentioned in Maitland's list of Baptist places. It was situate in Meeting-house Walk, Snow's-fields, and had been erected in 1736, chiefly by a Mrs. Ginn, who was excluded from the church in Maze-pond, for having avowed Unitarian sentiments. Mr. Sayer Rhudd had been preaching there after his return from France, as is mentioned in the account of Maze-pond, but had been rejected both by that church, and by the society of Particular Baptists on the same account. This circumstance led Mrs. Ginn to patronize and support him as the minister of her new place. Of this erroneous pedantic man, some particulars have been already given. His pamphlets, written to vindicate his own character, furnish facts which are not to his honour. From these it appears, that, even while he was pastor of the church in Devonshire-square, he had made attempts to be admitted among the Quakers, and had held several meetings with some of the principal members of that society, for the purpose of becoming a member with them. When this project failed, he wrote a letter to Lord Chancellor King, praying for admission into the established church. In this, too, he was equally unsuccessful; and when all these plans proved abortive, he attempted to persuade the Baptists that these unprincipled attempts ought to be attributed to juve-

nile indiscretions, and that they should believe him when he said, that he was still sincerely attached to them and to their principles; and that notwithstanding he had given up the doctrine of the Trinity, he was still a Particular Baptist!

His patroness, Mrs. Ginn, died about two years after; and it is highly probable that Mr. Rhudd wrote the account of this lady, in the Daily Advertiser for Thursday, June 15, 1738. It is therefore proper to introduce it.

"Last Sunday departed this life, in the sixtieth year of her age, Mrs. Elizabeth Ginn, of Harrington-Butts, widow, a gentlewoman very remarkable for her strict attachment to the Christian revelation, as contained in the Scriptures, and for her pious zeal in the Baptist profession; for the sake of which, through the severity of relations in her younger years, and the blind zeal of a certain community in the latter part of her life, she met with much unreasonable and cruel treatment. Her exemplary virtue and good behaviour, as a serious upright Christian, could not screen her from the censure of those who lay more stress upon mysteries, upon speculative notions, and needless distinctions, than on the duties of rational piety. But her ill treatment served to increase and quicken her inclination to attempt promoting the liberty of private judgment and Christian charity in a better way. To that end a place of worship was erected at her own expence, and encouragement given, that truth in its native purity and plainness might again be preached, and the religion of Jesus freed from obscurity and imposition."

After Mr. Rhudd had lost the hundred pounds per annum, paid him by Mrs. Ginn, he found that what he called truth in its "native purity and plainness," would not procure him support: and therefore, his congregation being but few in number, in 1742 he again applied for a living in the established church, and soon obtained that of Walmer, in Kent. He kept an academy in the town of Deal, where he died, May 6, 1757.

He always affixed the title of M. D. to his name, and was called Doctor Rhudd. From this circumstance, however, it does not follow that he understood medicine, any more than that those ministers who affix LL. D. to their names, are acquainted with the canon or the civil law.

Judging from the story he has told of his own vacillating opinions and conduct, it appears that he was a vain conceited person. The fact that the Calvinistic ministers who had excluded him from their society, never answered his provoking pamphlets, makes it probable that they thought him beneath their attention;—they answered him not a word.*

After Mr. Rhudd had conformed, the place of worship was taken by Mr. John Wesley, of which an account has been given, p. 290.

* Mr. Rhudd published a variety of books and pamphlets, of which the following is a list:—1. A Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Martha Clarke, who died Jan. 14, 1729-30, preached at Devonshire-square.—2. An Elegy on the Death of the Rev. John Noble, 1730.—3. A Sermon preached in Devonshire-square, Jan. 16, 1731, on the Death of Mr. Matthew Maddin.—4. An Essay towards a new Explication of the Doctrines of the Resurrection, Millennium, and Judgment, 1734.—5. The Doctrine of the Divine Being under his grand distinguishing Characters of God, Father, and Spirit; a Sermon occasioned by the Anniversary of the Foundation of the Meeting-house, Snow's-fields, Aug. 1, 1735.—6. Three Letters to the Calvinistical Baptist Board, 1737.—7. Two Anniversary Sermons for the First of August, 1736, 1737.—8. A Funeral Sermon for Mrs. Ginn, 1738.—9. The Doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ; more especially with regard to his Person as Mediator, Aug. 1, 1738.—10. The Doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ pre-existing his state of Incarnation, as Man and Mediator, by the production of his Human Spirit in Union with the Father from everlasting; the substance of six Sermons, 1740.—11. A Defence of the plain Account of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, 1741.—12. A Negative to the Question, Whether is the Archangel Michael our Saviour? explained and defended; in a Letter to the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Clogher, 1753.—13. ΠΡΟΔΡΟΜΟΣ; or, Observations on the English Letters: being an Attempt to reform our Alphabet, &c. 1755.

A Mr. Thomas Charlton, who had been a Methodist minister, was baptized here by Mr. Hughes in 1772, and continued preaching at Snow's-fields till his death in 1774. After him was a Mr. Cartwright, a Pædo-baptist,* who preached here several years. The next minister was Mr. Martin Ready, also a Baptist, who kept a school at Peckham, and died Feb. 11, 1805. He was succeeded by Mr. Mansil, who was an Arian Baptist. It then passed into the hands of the Welch Methodists; but for the last few years it has been again occupied by a Baptist congregation under the care of Mr. Francis.

CHURCH IN COLLIERS'-RENTS.

THIS is in the Borough, and is the same place which is now called Colliers'-rents Meeting. The church was constituted upon the mixed communion plan, Dec. 16, 1726. Some few of the members had left Miles's-lane.

Mr. Clendon Dawkes, mentioned under some former articles, was the first minister. He had been assisted in his education for the ministry by the Baptist fund. When he settled here, in 1726, the church consisted of thirty-four members. He left them in 1730, and settled with the Joiners'-hall church, which met in Devonshire-square.

Mr. John Phillips, a Welchman, succeeded him in March, 1731. He had been minister of the church at Wrexham, and, on his settling in London, was received a member of the society at the Coffee-house. He was dismissed from the church in Colliers'-rents because "he declared, before the church, that he could not break bread to us because we were for mixed

* There was one of this name a Baptist in London, in 1754.

communion, and it was now contrary to his conscience." The author of a manuscript history of the London churches says of him, "He appears to be an honest man, but neither understands good English, (whatever he may Welch,) nor appears to know much in theology. He is not so much followed as his predecessor; and as the people are the lower sort, they will find it very difficult to support themselves. His people, too, are given to change, and are ready to cry up every new light as the best."

Mr. Phillips was in London in April 1735, and, it appears, went after this to Guildford. I find that in June 1740, a complaint was sent against him by that church to the ministers in London, who "advised, that the people who are dissatisfied with Mr. Phillips continue together, and pray one with another, and watch over one another in love, waiting for the issues of Providence, and avoiding any thing which may have the appearance of resentment," &c. It appears he left Guildford at this time. A writer in the Protestant Magazine, vol. vi. p. 54, says, "Mr. Phillips proved an intemperate character, and after being discarded at Colliers'-rents, and many attempts to settle at various places in the country, where he was acceptable until his sottishness exposed him, he was universally neglected by the denomination to which he professed to belong, and died in great poverty and contempt." This is a very affecting statement, that a minister of acceptable talents, after being many years employed as a public teacher of the sanctifying doctrines of the gospel, should have so degraded himself by sottish practices, as to sink into universal contempt. Wickedness in him was highly aggravated, and must have justly provoked the Almighty to *give him up to his own heart's lust,* and then *he walked in his own counsels,* and was evidently *a vessel to dishonour.* It was right such a minister should be disowned by the denomination to which he professed to belong, that they might not, by countenancing him, partake of his sin. If ministers, while preaching the gospel, live secretly in the sensual

gratification of sinful lusts, they should immediately, on being discovered, be put out of the public ministry; as no man should be received as a teacher of religion who does not *purge himself from these,* or who is not *a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.* Nor should a minister who has fallen into gross sins, be ever restored unto his office, unless he has given full proof of his repentance and reformation; and that God has again, by his Spirit, created in him a clean heart, and renewed a right spirit within him. But for a man to continue preaching, notwithstanding the discovery of his sins, and the reproach consequent upon it, and for the people to support and countenance him in doing so, is a reproach, a blot, and a disgrace to the holy name by which we are called. It is to the honour of the Baptists that but few instances have occurred like that of Mr. Phillips, and that in most cases such men have not found supporters, except among those professors who have, either from a corrupt creed or wicked practices, been desirous to obtain countenance from a minister equally corrupt and wicked; thus furnishing a frightful comment upon the prophet's language,—*They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart upon iniquity. And there shall be like people, like priest; and I will punish them for their ways, and reward them for their doings,*" &c. Hosea iv. 8, 9.

Mr. Daniel Stevens was settled as pastor April 22, 1733, having been dismissed from a church at Weedon and Flower. There is no further account of him excepting that he was living in 1741. I have seen no proof of his having been a Baptist; but the church after this had Pædobaptist ministers.

CHURCH AT JOINERS'-HALL.

THIS building, which was one of the city halls belonging to the Joiners' Company, was situated in Joiners'-hall-buildings, formerly called Friars'-lane. It is supposed that one of our oldest churches met here, though there are no records earlier than the reign of Charles II. Mr. John Harris, who was pastor here in 1671, was one of the seven London pastors who convened the General Assembly in 1689. (See vol. i. p. 480.) He was accompanied by Messrs. Samuel Boreal, William Dicks, and John Merriot, as messengers to that Assembly. It should seem that he died soon after: for at the next meeting of the Assembly, in 1692, two ministers of this church attended; these were Messrs. Tobias Russel and Thomas Mariot: of these ministers we have no further particulars.

It was in the year 1692 that Mr. Joseph Maisters removed from Theobalds, to take charge of this church. Among its members were some distinguished persons, viz. Sir Gregory Page, Bart. and his lady Dame Mary Page, of whom some particulars will be given in the course of its history: it is probable these were both baptized by Mr. Maisters.

In the year 1694, this church is mentioned as dismissing a member to that in Petty France, and as being also in the same association as that in Devonshire-square. In 1705 it became associated with twelve other churches, Mr. Maisters, (the pastor,) and two deacons, (Mr. Richard Pain, and Mr. John Travers,) attending as messengers. In the next year, on March 25, the General Assembly of ten churches was held at this place, when Mr. Joseph Stennett preached the sermon, and presided as the moderator.

It is not known for what reason, but the church was obliged

to leave Joiners'-hall in 1708, when it removed to Pinners'-hall.

The church at Pinners'-hall, (the history of which has been already given,) occupied the place in the morning only of the Lord's day; it was let out to other congregations the remaining parts of the day. This was also frequently the case in other places, a circumstance which, in some instances, has made it difficult to trace the succession of pastors in distinct churches. Dr. Watts's congregation, which had assembled in the afternoon at Pinners'-hall, removing in 1708, Mr. Maisters and his people took it. Here they continued till 1724, when they removed to Devonshire-square, occupying that place alternately, in the morning and afternoon, until the church became extinct.

Of Mr. Joseph Maisters see an account in vol. ii. p. 183—187. He died in 1717, and was succeeded by Mr. Thomas Richardson, who came to London in 1718, from Tottlebank in Lancashire, of which church he had been the pastor four years, having been ordained there in 1710. When the Baptist fund was formed, this church (said to have been late under the care of Mr. Maisters) was applied to on October 15, 1717, through a Mr. Goddard, one of the deacons. The Rev. Messrs. Stinton and Thomas Harrison were the messengers. The next year, 1718, the church paid into the fund £55. 18*s.* 6*d.* In 1724, Mr. Richardson, who was the then pastor, took his place as a manager of the fund with Mr. Davis, a messenger.

The congregation left Pinners'-hall in 1724, and applied for the use of Devonshire-square. In the minutes which relate to that transaction, they are repeatedly called that "honourable church," though it does not appear why that epithet was used; unless it was because of its antiquity, or on account of the opulence of some of its members. In the arrangements which were entered into between the two churches, it appears that the church of Pinners'-hall was to pay ten pounds per year for

the use of Devonshire-square meeting, and three pounds to the clerk "for setting the psalm before the first prayer and after the last prayer."

We know but little of Mr. Richardson. His name is among the non-subscribing ministers at the Salters'-Hall synod, from which it appears he was more tenacious for his *dissenting* than for his *orthodox* principles. In 1723 he wrote a letter to Mr. Emanuel Gifford of Bristol, respecting his son Mr. Andrew Gifford, at that time a member of the church under his care. In 1728, he preached and published a funeral sermon at Devonshire-square, for the Lady Dowager Page, from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. Mr. Thomas Harrison, of Wild-street did the same, and at the same place. This also was published. On this singular occasion, Mr. (afterward Dr.) John Gill published a curious tract, entitled, "An Essay on the original of Funeral Sermons, Orations, and Odes, occasioned by two funeral discourses lately published, on the death of Dame Mary Page, relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart. The one by Mr. Harrison, with an Oration at her Interment, and an Ode sacred to her Memory: the other by Mr. Richardson; with some Observations on each of them. In a Letter to a Friend."

It appears from this essay, that Mr. Harrison had been requested to preach the funeral sermon by Mr. Lewis Way and his Lady, who were nearly related, because they "suspected Mr. Richardson had not ability to compose, preach, and publish a sermon which might be acceptable."

From some extracts, made by Mr. Gill, it should appear that the talents of Mr. Richardson were respectable. The following paragraph is selected. "Speaking of the righteousness of Christ," says Mr. G. "he has expressed himself very judiciously. 'When the Christian hath made the greatest advances in holiness, he cannot but reflect upon his own conduct with shame and blushing: it is in the righteousness of the Redeemer only, we can appear spotless at the throne of God: this is the

Christian's sole dependance, this his joy, this his comfort, under a view of his own imperfections, even this, that he has a righteousness to trust to, and depend upon, which is equal to all that the law has demanded.' This single paragraph," adds Mr. Gill, "I will venture to say, is worth Mr. Harrison's whole sermon."*

There is no account of the time of Mr. Richardson's death, but I suppose it was about 1733; so that he must have preached in London fifteen years, at Pinners'-hall five years, and in Devonshire-square ten years.

As Dame Mary Page died during the time of his filling the pastoral office, this seems to be the proper place for introducing a short account of her character, premising that it is taken from Mr. Harrison's "Funeral Sermon, Oration, and Ode!" In the Ode Mr. H. exclaims,

> "At length the Heroine's crowned. Her numerous foes,
> With whom she long conflicted, are subdued;
> Under her feet they're laid; while she, in strains
> Angelic, sings the praises of the Lord.†"

"She was," says Mr. H. "the relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart. who was himself many years an honourable member of this (Pinners'-hall) church, and whose death was most justly lamented by the whole body of Protestant Dissenters; for they were sensible of his readiness zealously to espouse and support their common interests, and liberty of serving God according to their consciences."

Speaking of the Lady Dowager, Mr. H. says, "It was her happiness to have the benefit of an early education; and in her

* Dr. Gill's Sermons and Tracts, vol. iii. p. 623.

† Dr. Gill says, speaking of this composition, "I confess, Sir, I have but little judgment in poetry, yet I am ready to conclude, it is the best of these his performances."

early time of life her heart was inclined to seek the God of her fathers. She took great pains to consult controversial works relating to the grounds of the dissent from the established church, making it her practice to conform her sentiments and conduct to the rule of the Scriptures. Her sentiments respecting baptism were founded upon Mark xvi. 16, and Acts vii. 12. After five years' diligent search, being fully convinced it was her duty to put on the Lord Jesus by baptism, she was baptized, in the presence of above 200 people, and was added to the church then under the care of the Rev. Mr. Maisters. How great an ornament she was to her holy profession, and how careful to adorn the doctrine of God in all things, there are many witnesses in this assembly.

"For the last four or five years of her life she was greatly afflicted with a dropsy, and during that time having read a Defence of Episcopacy, in the 'Preface to Dr. Warren's Impartial Church,' &c. she anew examined her religious opinions. The result of these inquiries was," says Mr. H. "that she was of too catholic a spirit to blame, or even to think the worse of those who preferred the established church; yet, for her own part she declared, she had no doubts, from any motives suggested to her consideration, to induce her to think she was under the necessity of making a better choice; but had abundant reason to bless God whose grace enabled her to persevere steadfast and immoveable."

In describing her character Mr. H. says, "God had blessed her with many endowments of body and mind, as well as rendered her eminent in the exercise of many Christian graces. She was an affectionate friend, and very ready to do good offices. Her constant regards to this church, her tender concern for pastor and people, and her uncommon benefaction* upon their

* It does not appear exactly what this uncommon benefaction was. It

removal hither, deserve a particular acknowledgment, as does also her further bounty given in her last will for the relief of the poor members. The principle which inclined her to this had been a powerful one during the time of her life. Vast sums of money she distributed in so silent a way, that, to use our Saviour's words, *her left hand knew not what her right hand did.* Nor could it now have been known to us, if she had not left behind an exact account of her affairs. And it appears from that account, that her charity was truly Christian, and not confined to a party; and that she aimed at more than the preserving a miserable life, even the making those comfortable in their circumstances, who without her assistance would have felt the greatest hardships. She was a great instance of patience under long and continued weaknesses of body, and she owned with gratitude to the Divine Being his goodness to her, in the plenty and affluence he blessed her with, which procured her all human means and assistance. She was very thankful that God supported her spirits, and preserved her intellects, being reconciled to all the pains and infirmities she sustained, often repeating, *Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?*

"A few days before her death, when asked whether she had a comfortable prospect of another world, she replied, "I have, I have, I have." And to some of her near relations she said, "Now I am going into eternity, I am able to review my past conduct with comfort, and think that what I have done is right." And without the least groan or struggle of nature she fell asleep in Jesus, March 4, 1768."

She was buried in Bunhill-fields, where a very handsome tomb was erected to her memory. It stands on the north side, and has the following inscription:—

is probable the expense of "fitting up the two pews," which it should seem she never occupied.

Here lies
DAME MARY PAGE,
Relict of Sir Gregory Page, Bart.*
She departed this life, on March 4, 1728,
in the 56th year of her age.
In sixty-seven months she was tapped sixty-six times,
had taken away
two hundred and forty gallons of water,
without ever repining at her case,
or ever fearing its operation.

The Joiners'-hall church, meeting in Devonshire-square, after a vacancy of more than two years, invited Mr. Hugh Evans of Bristol to become their pastor, which he declined. In 1735, Mr. CLENDON DAWKES was chosen to that office. He had been a minister in London about fifteen years: he first was pastor of the church in Broad Street, Old Gravel-lane, Wapping, from about 1720 till 1726. At the latter period he united with a newly constituted church in Collier's Rents, Southwark; and in 1730 he resigned, it has been presumed on account of that church having been formed upon the principle of mixed communion. After spending three or four years without any settled charge, he was called to succeed Mr. Richardson in 1735, and continued with that people about sixteen years. Being at length greatly reduced by deaths or removals, they were under the necessity of dissolving their church state; it is supposed about 1761. Mr. Dawkes accepted the charge of the church at Hemel Hempstead about 1750, where he died Dec. 12, 1758.

His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. John Brine, from 2 Cor. v. 1, the text chosen by the deceased. Mr. Brine

* Sir Gregory Page made a present to the Baptist Fund of twenty guineas in 1723. But the church never sent more than 28*l.* 3*s.* in any one year. The whole amount of their contributions in the course of about thirty years was less than 500*l.*

published this sermon, entitled, "The knowledge of future happiness the support of the saints in present troubles." From this discourse we extract the following account of Mr. Dawkes. "It may now be expected that I should give a character of him, and a beauteous representation might be given of him; but I must inform you that he laid an injunction upon me not to enlarge upon his character, and that he expressed a dislike of bestowing encomiums upon the dead; however a few words concerning him may surely be allowed. He was meek, humble, and modest; wise and learned; diligent in study, there is reason to think to the prejudice of his constitution. He had an enlarged acquaintance with the evangelical scheme, and a spiritual savour of the truths of the gospel. In his last long illness which issued in his death, he was remarkably favoured with the gracious presence of God, and filled with a holy admiration of sovereign grace and mercy. Those glorious truths which he recommended to you, were the matter of his support, consolation, and unspeakable joy in the views of his dissolution."

It would have been pleasant had Mr. Brine said something of the usefulness of Mr. Dawkes's labours, and shown that "his enlarged acquaintance with the evangelical scheme" had been the means of his building up and enlarging the church of God. Instead of this, it should seem that the congregations he served in London declined under his hands, and soon became extinct. It is a very affecting circumstance, that "evangelical truth" should be preached without sinners being converted, and the church of God increased by it. *The kingdom of heaven,* said our Lord, *is like unto a net cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind.* But is there not some serious defect in casting the net by those ministers who do not become what our Lord promised his apostles they should be, *fishers of men?* Those ministers who follow our Lord's example in his public ministry, and who attend to this commission, and *preach the gospel to every creature,* appear to me to cast the net into the sea, and

therefore may expect to *catch men.* Success is from God, but we ought not to expect to be favoured with it, if we do not use the appointed means, and in the appointed way.

Thus terminated the existence of the Joiners'-hall church, which had existed more than a century, and which was, at one period of its history, remarkably prosperous and respectable; "the honourable church," as the courtly members of Devonshire-square church chose to express themselves concerning it.

It may not be easy to trace all the circumstances which led to the gradual decline and final dissolution of this honourable church: could this be accurately done, it would no doubt be a profitable lesson for other churches similarly constituted, to avoid the shoals and quicksands on which it was stranded, and the rocks on which it was shipwrecked.

One cause, and perhaps a principal one, was its having no settled place of worship. The unsettled state of things during the reign of that capricious monarch, Charles II. would necessarily prevent the Baptists from erecting meeting-houses, as there was no certainty of their being permitted to use them. There were but few, if any, meeting-houses built in London before the declaration of Charles, in 1672. "Now," says Burnet, "all was grace and favour to the Dissenters, and many of their ministers took out licences to preach, and their people erected places for worship." About ten years afterwards, in 1683, the most violent measures were resorted to for suppressing the Dissenters, so that they were obliged to shut up their places of worship, and many of their ministers were committed to prison.

When James II. for the purpose of humbling the Church of England, and to introduce the papists, published his declaration for liberty of conscience, in 1687, some of the Baptist and other ministers in London presented addresses to the king, thanking him for his clemency and royal condescension. The

Baptists now "returned to their great meeting places, and took others as large as they could procure." (See vol. i. p. 470.) Many of these were the city halls belonging to the different companies of liverymen: consequently they were subject to the will of those companies. They probably took them only for short terms, and at the expiration of their leases, either from an exorbitant advance of rent, or some other causes, could not renew them: in which case, instead of profiting by such events, and providing against them by erecting places of worship, they removed to other halls. What a lamentation that some of the superfluous wealth of Sir Gregory Page, Bart. or his dowager Lady, was not devoted to such a purpose. Then, in all probability, the church at Joiners'-hall would have been perpetuated, and a more splendid monument would have been erected to their memory than the pageant which stands in Bunhill-fields.

It is likely, too, that the supineness of the people, and the indolence of the ministers, contributed not a little towards that event. How disgusting, that ministers in full health, and in the vigour of youth, should preach only once a day to the churches of which they were pastors! It was not likely that spiritual life, union, and zeal, would be excited by such scanty labours, however excellent and learned the sermons might be; nor that the members of such churches would say, "Let what will happen, *we will not forsake the house of our God.*"

What influence the kind of doctrinal preaching of Mr. Dawkes might have to reduce the church, cannot be ascertained with precision: it is evident, however, that it was not the means of preventing the removals of many of the members to other churches, nor of counteracting that desponding spirit among those who remained, which led them to consent to the dissolution of the church. It is a little remarkable, that not only this church, but that of the Rev. John Brine, the eulogist of Mr. Dawkes's evangelical system, has also gradually dege-

nerated in purity of sentiment, and declined in numbers, till it too is ranked with the dissolved churches. These remarks are not made in the way of asperity, but with a design that all our ministers and churches may rigidly watch against any departure, whether in doctrinal sentiments, or in purity of discipline, from "the simplicity of Christ;" and to stir up those who are in a declining condition to listen to our Lord's exhortation to the angel of the church in Sardis,—*I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die,* Rev. iii. 1, 2.

CHURCH AT TALLOW-CHANDLERS'-HALL.

MAITLAND calls this building a "stately hall." It is a spacious and elegant building, situated on Dowgate-hill; adorned with columns and arches of the Tuscan order. It was used for about half a century after the period of the Revolution by a Baptist congregation.

I think it probable that two churches occupied it at different parts of the day, under the care of Mr. Elias Keach and Mr. John Noble. The former of these ministers, with part of his people, left it in 1697; and I conjecture that those who remained united with Mr. Noble's people, it being expressly said, that "he became the pastor of a church here, composed of two congregations."*

* Crosby says, "Mr. Henry Danvers was joint-elder of a baptized congregation near Aldgate." In Milton's State Papers, p. 121, there is an address about the year 1656, to the Lord General Cromwell, and his Council of State, entitled, "The humble representation of the congregation

This worthy minister was a member of the church in Petty France. His name is high in the list of the members there in 1675. He was doubtless called to the ministry there, and must have had great advantages from the learning and piety of its worthy pastors, Mr. William Collins and Dr. Nehemiah Coxe.

In the records of the church of Petty France, there is an account of the appointment of "four members of that church to meet four of brother Noble's church, at the coffee-house in Finch-lane." This was at the beginning of the year 1702. I conjecture, therefore, that he was at that time pastor of the church Without Aldgate, of which Mr. Danvers had been pastor. Mr. Edward Man, whose name appears in the list of members in 1675, (and who is said in those records to have succeeded as the pastor in Aldgate when Mr. Danvers removed to Holland in 1687,) attended the General Assemblies in 1689, and 1692, as pastor of a church in Houndsditch; and therefore it is very likely that Mr. Noble succeeded him, and removed the people to Tallow-chandlers'-hall at the end of the year 1697. This will agree exactly with Mr. Wallin's statement in his funeral sermon for Mr. Noble, who died June 12, 1730, that he had filled the station of pastor "with great honour, integrity, and usefulness, for about thirty-four years, in all which time he truly manifested himself a minister of the grace of Christ."

Mr. Noble had suffered much persecution when a youth on account of being the son of Dissenters, and had often been in

of Jesus Christ, usually meeting at the Chequer Without Aldgate." This was signed by fourteen names, among whom were J. Danvers, (probably a mistake for H. Danvers,) and Samuel Oates. The last mentioned is the minister who was imprisoned, and fettered, and tried for murder, by the Presbyterians, at Chelmsford, in 1646, because a young woman who had been baptized had died a few weeks after. As the charge was not supported by evidence, his enemies had not the gratification of seeing him hanged. Vol. i. p. 197.

prison with his parents before he knew the grace of God in truth. "In the early part of his life," says his biographer, "which was a time of persecution, he used to attend his religious parents to the worship of God, and was with them and others apprehended and sent to the common gaol, in which he suffered much hardship from the enemies of true religion and liberty; concerning which he used to say, that though he suffered for the profession of religion, yet, at that time, he was destitute of the saving knowledge of Christ; he would hence very justly observe, that a religious education, a mere profession, or a zeal for a party, might carry persons a great length in suffering for Christianity, while, at the same time, they are strangers to themselves, and the powerful influences of the grace of the gospel. The all-wise disposer of all persons and things, ordered his imprisonment to great advantage in the end; for while he was confined, only for the profession of religion, the Lord was graciously pleased to work a saving change upon his heart; there he began to receive the light, and feel the power of divine grace, which afterwards, by the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, was much increased, to the establishment and joy of his own soul, and rendered him greatly useful in the church of God. Here also he pursued his studies for useful knowledge, in which he made so considerable a progress, that he was able, upon proper occasions, to defend as well as to preach, the glorious truths of the Gospel. Soon after his enlargement he submitted to the laws of Christ, and being baptized upon the profession of his faith, was added to a gospel church; who plainly perceiving his capacity for the ministry, soon called him to that work, and sent him to preach the gospel to other churches; in which he was, through the Divine blessing attending his labours, greatly successful in the whole course of his ministry."* He preached occasionally to

* See Wallin's Sermon, p. 31—33.

several churches in the country while he resided in London, and kept a grammar school for his support. He objected for several years to take upon himself the pastoral charge, thinking he could be more useful in preaching the gospel, without charge, to poor congregations. He was thirty-seven years of age when he settled at Tallow-chandlers'-hall, over the two congregations, as has been before stated. He continued there till about 1727, when the congregation removed to a place in Maidenhead-court, Great Eastcheap, where we shall give other particulars concerning him. See also vol. ii. 342—345.

Mr. Samuel Wilson was an assistant for a few years to Mr. Noble, till he accepted the pastoral office at Gravel-lane, Wapping, in the year 1720. He preached also an evening lecture at Tallow-chandlers'-hall, which was very numerously attended. When Mr. Wilson settled at Wapping, Mr. Noble had as an assistant Mr. Peter Davenport.

It should seem that Mr. Noble was not very friendly with the other ministers at the commencement of his ministry, his church not being connected with the assemblies in 1704 and 1705. He belonged, however, to the Society of Ministers of "the particular persuasion," which met at the Gloucestershire Coffee-house, on Monday afternoon. He seems to have attended these meetings pretty constantly, and was often in the chair, between the years 1723 and 1727.

CHURCH IN GREAT EASTCHEAP.

THIS meeting-house was situated in Maidenhead-court. It was a large square building with three galleries, containing about seven hundred people. Underneath it were shops, and the way to it from Great Eastcheap was through a passage

into the court. It was left unoccupied for some time; and was pulled down about twenty years since, and a large warehouse built upon its scite.

Some time between 1726 and 1730, Mr. Noble's congregation removed to this place from Tallow-chandlers'-hall. The congregation was then in a very prosperous state, the people "expressing a very great love for the gospel, and generously contributing towards it; manifesting strong affection for its aged and honoured pastor, by the most kind and generous treatment, even to the end of his life."*

Mr. Noble was at this time nearly seventy years of age, and had gained a good degree of the respect and confidence of his brethren in the ministry, being looked up to by them as a father of the London churches. He preached at the ordination of Mr. (afterwards Dr.) John Gill, from Acts xx. 28. He was a very strenuous defender of the Calvinistic doctrines, which at times led him to be suspected of uncharitableness towards those who differed from him. But when he filled the chair at the Society of Ministers, he behaved with that prudence and moderation, which astonished many who were acquainted with the zeal he displayed in defending the doctrines which he held. Crosby mentions as a proof of his liberal spirit, that "though he was very strenuous in opposing the practice of the laying on of hands at the ordination of ministers, yet he attended that of Mr. Gill, where it was observed, without saying a word against it, considering those who practised it as acting conscientiously.

Mr. Crosby, who knew Mr. Noble, speaks very respectfully of his character, as a man of learning and excellent parts. He says, that he was reported to be an Antinomian, but intimates that this charge was unjustly fixed upon him, and that though some Calvinists had run into extremes, and might be generally

* Funeral Sermon for Mr. Noble, by Mr. Edward Wallin.

known by their pride and uncharitableness, and the disturbances which they caused in churches by the spirit they manifested, yet Mr. Noble was not of that description. He appears to have been precisely of the sentiments of those worthy men, Skepp, and Brine, and Gill, and of many in our own time; who, though they are opposed to the general invitations of the gospel, are also most strongly inimical to the peculiar features of the Antinomian scheme, viz. that sanctification, by the Holy Spirit, is not personal and progressive; and that the moral law of God is not a rule of life to believers in Christ.

Mr. Noble generally attended the meeting at the Gloucestershire Coffee-house, and when present appears usually to have filled the chair: this distinction arose doubtless from a respect for his age and usefulness. The last time he attended this meeting was March 20, 1726-27. He died June 12, 1730, in the seventy-first year of his age, and was buried in the Baptist burying-ground in the park, Southwark.

The church requested Mr. Edward Wallin to preach the funeral sermon for their late esteemed pastor, and afterwards were unanimous in soliciting him to publish it. Mr. Wallin, to express his "hearty esteem for their late honoured pastor, and also for the church," complied with their request. In the dedication of this sermon to the church, he says, "It was preached upon as mournful an occasion, as perhaps the church had ever met with. The removal of such a pastor," he adds, "is indeed a very awakening providence, and loudly calls on you to consider what improvement you have made under his excellent ministry; and also to wait, by faith and prayer, on the Great Shepherd, to enable you, as you have *received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him*, considering what is at this time the proper work for every member."

When it is known that Mr. Edward Wallin was not of the same views respecting the manner in which the unconverted should be addressed in the ministry of the gospel, it

will appear the more amiable in the church, who invited him to preach on such an occasion.*

The subject discussed by Mr. Wallin, was Phil. i. 21; *For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* The sermon is entitled, "The Redeemer magnified by the Ministers of the Gospel, both in Life and in Death." Under the head that ministers of the gospel are called ambassadors for Christ, Mr. Wallin says, "And when they have set forth their Lord's greatness and grace, they address themselves to them as those who have compassion for their souls. The ministry of reconciliation being committed to them, their great concern is to deal with the hearts of men, in order to their being willing subjects of a dear Redeemer; and therefore, as an ambassador for Christ, as though God did beseech sinners by him, the tenor of their address is, *I pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God:* so that their whole concern is to serve Christ, by endeavouring in his name to reconcile sinners to God: and surely such ambassadors do certainly magnify and honour their Prince."

Thus Mr. Wallin, and the church in Great Eastcheap, exemplified that "love and unity," though "Calvinists differing in opinion from each other," which Mr. John Brine afterwards (and who was at that time a member of the Society of Ministers) so powerfully and affectionately recommended. Had the friends of Mr. Noble been as contracted and censorious as some worthy ministers and churches of the present day, they would never have unanimously requested Mr. Wallin to publish a sermon, however evangelical, which contained the obnoxious sentiment, that "the tenor of the ministers' address to unconverted sinners is, *I pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*"

The description which Mr. Wallin gives of Mr. Noble's mi-

* Mr. Wallin had preached a funeral sermon there not long before for a Mr. Samuel Edwards.

nistry is also very highly creditable to his liberality. His opinion that the deceased minister had not fully set before the unconverted their duty to repent and believe the gospel, did not lead him to detract from the general excellency of his character, and the usefulness of his ministry.

The following is the character which Mr. Wallin gives of him.—"The Scripture doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, the divinity of Christ, the efficacious operations of the Holy Spirit, he esteemed to be necessary articles of his faith, and parts of his public ministrations. His clear apprehensions of electing love, and the rich display of sovereign grace in the everlasting covenant, were plainly discovered to many, by a turn of thought, and plainness of expression, almost peculiar to himself. When he considered the concern of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in the contrivance and execution of the divine scheme for the redemption and salvation of lost sinners, he was even in an holy ecstasy, when he expressed himself upon that glorious subject. Christ was his delightful theme; he loved to dwell upon the glorious person, offices, and fulness, of the Redeemer, in his public ministry; and was so happy, as to explain and improve those great doctines, to the profit and satisfaction of his hearers, beyond most other ministers. He frequently insisted upon the priestly office of Christ; and in a manner very clear and convincing would treat of the full satisfaction, abundant merit, and complete righteousness, of the Redeemer. Many are witnesses, that the great doctrines of efficacious grace, of the indwelling of the Spirit, of imputed righteousness alone for justification in the sight of God, and the final perseverance of the saints, took up a great part of his ministry; though he well knew how to lay open the miserable case of sinners by nature, and preach free and full salvation to such by Christ alone, in a very plain and affecting manner.

"It hath been observed by many, that in his public ad-

dresses to God, he seemed to be favoured with an eminent degree of the Spirit of grace and supplication, whereby he was enabled to come boldly to the throne of grace. How would he draw nigh to God, in a Mediator, with holy reverence, and yet with a becoming freedom, pleading with him as his own God, as one having received the Spirit of adoption, crying *Abba, Father!* In this work he appeared to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and to plead with the Lord, as one used to converse with him, and graciously admitted by faith, to nearness, communion, and fellowship with him. The freedom of spirit, and liberty of expression, with which he used to draw nigh to God, tended greatly to assist, and sweetly to enlarge the minds of others, who joined with him in that part of public worship. To what hath been obsered of this eminent servant of Christ I shall only add, he was one, who, in the whole course of his ministry laboured to exalt a crucified Redeemer, and recommended him to precious souls; according to the large measure of the gift of Christ which was in him. What he apprehended to be truth, as it is in Jesus, he ministered with all boldness, freedom, and faithfulness, without regard to the censures of men; accounting himself a servant to his master alone, for the discharge of the several parts of his ministry."

Mr. Noble published a funeral sermon for Mr. Richard Robins, minister of the gospel, entitled "The Believer's Triumph over Death."

I have heard but of one minister who was sent out by this church. This was Mr. Robert Hanwell, who, March 10, 1729-30, was ordained over the church at Kettering, and was a respectable but not a successful pastor there for nearly twenty years. He died September 1749.

Mr. Noble was succeeded in the pastoral office by Mr. Samuel Dew. He had been an occasional preacher among the Baptists in Gloucestershire for several years, till at length he

was settled with a church at Weston near Ross, where he was very popular. In the early part of 1731 he removed to London, and settled with the congregation in Maidenhead-court. He first attended with the Society of London Ministers, Oct. 26, 1731. It is said that Mr. Dew's popularity soon declined, and that his labours were not so successful in London as they had been in the country. In consequence of no blessing attending his ministry in the conversion of sinners, the congregation gradually fell away, till at last, after he had preached nearly thirty years, the lease expiring, the church being unable to renew, it was dissolved in 1760.* Most of the surviving members joined the church under the care of Dr. Gill; where also Mr. Dew communicated at the Lord's table till his death, which took place a few years after the dissolution of the church. The last time he attended with the ministers at the Coffee-house, appears to have been March 24, 1761.

In Mr. Joshua Thomas's manuscript account of the church at Weston near Ross, in Herefordshire, he says, "Mr. Dew was very useful and acceptable in the country, but his removal to London seemed like a step out of his proper sphere. He lived there many years; but though a godly man, and sound in the doctrines of the gospel, yet the church declined under his hands, and broke up before he died. He was still respected in the city, and preached occasionally while he was able."

Mr. Dew is said to have been a man of respectable character and of good talents, and much esteemed by the admirers of what is called high, or hyper Calvinism; but the manner in which he explained some doctrines of grace was considered by others as having an Antinomian tendency. The only sermon he published was a funeral sermon for Mrs. Mary Bevois, and was entitled, "Assurance of Interest in a living Redeemer, the

* In 1753 the church consisted of about forty members; see p. 278.

Saints support both in Life and in Death; preached at Dr. Gill's place in Goat-street, April 1, 1735."

The sermon is a mere doctrinal discussion of the subject of "assurance," &c. with scarcely a line of application, or a word of exhortation to the practical duties of religion. The few lines that follow are about the whole amount of application. Speaking to the relations of the deceased, Mr. Dew says, "*Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed;*" the meaning of which, in his estimation, seems merely to have been, "Use the means which God has appointed; hear the gospel preached, in which Christ is revealed as the object of faith, and by which men are instructed in the way of salvation." The reader will remark, that Mr. Dew's application of the principles of our Lord's address was very different from the use which the Lord Jesus made of them to his unconverted hearers, to whom he addressed them. They understood the Lord Jesus to mean, that they should seek for *spiritual blessings*, even those blessings which would *endure to everlasting life:* but they did not apprehend that they were encouraged and directed to apply by faith to the anointed Messiah, the Son of Man, to obtain these blessings; and therefore they asked, *What shall we do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said to them, This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent*, John vi. 27, 29.

It is by no means wonderful that a system of preaching like that of which the above is a specimen, should, in a few years, turn *a fruitful land into barrenness*, and make a flourishing church *a desolate heritage!* Mr. Dew's name will appear in history very differently to that of his honoured predecessor, in having ruined the garden which the former had planted.

The grand difference between the ministry of Mr. Noble and of Mr. Dew appears to have been, that the former preached the

doctrines of sovereign and distinguishing grace, spiritually, experimentally, and practically; and the other, systematically, speculatively, and controversially. Hence the ministry of Mr. Noble was the cause of many being gathered out of the world into the church, and of *helping them much who had believed through grace;* and that of Mr. Dew, of exciting a captious and censorious spirit among the members of the church, which led them to *bite and devour one another:* and as no others were induced to join their fellowship, they were soon *destroyed one of another.* The ministry of Mr. Noble resembled the conduct of a *good householder;*—he rightly divided the words of truth, the food which the doctrines of the gospel produce, distributing milk to babes, and strong meat to those of full age, whose senses were exercised to discern both good and evil. The ministry of Mr. Dew, on the other hand, resembled that of a person unskilful in the word of righteousness; while he was always handing out what he, perhaps, and his friends considered to be strong meat, he left them so ignorant of the nature and design of the gospel, that when for the time they ought to have been teachers, it had become necessary, from the nature and tendency of his preaching, that some other should teach them what were the first principles of the oracles of God.

Another cause of the decline of this church is probably to be traced to a dispute in the year 1741-2, between a Mr. Bevois and a Mr. Anderson, deacons of the church, on a matter of trade. This matter was brought before the Society of Ministers, and by them it was recommended that the matter of contention should be left, under arbitration bonds, to two persons of the same trade, jointly chosen, and that Mr. Edward Wallin should be the referee. After this the ministers and deputies were requested to meet on this business at Mr. Dew's meeting-house. Then came "an abusive letter, highly reflecting upon the ministers and deputies." This letter was ordered to be laid before Mr. Dew's church, with a complaint respecting Mr.

Bevois, a member and officer in that church, for his conduct in sending the letter; and Mr. Samuel Wilson and Mr. Edward Wallin were appointed to deliver the same at their next church-meeting. The church in Maidenhead-court took it into consideration, and reproved Mr. Bevois, who, so far from receiving it with "kindness," and as an "excellent oil which would not break his head," was very much offended, conformed to the Church of England, and the church resolved to exclude him after he was no longer with them.

It is easy to perceive what a flame of angry contention the church must have been in on an occasion of this nature. An affair of trade was not likely to be settled by the members of the church, even though at a church-meeting; nor were ministers suitable parties as arbitrators in such a case, who ought to have recollected the advice of Apelles to the cobbler, or rather the proverb of Solomon, (Prov. xxvi. 17,) *He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.* Whoever else may escape being injured, he is almost certain of getting bitten and wounded by the provoked animal. It would be well if such matters, when they take place in our churches, were referred for investigation and decision to reputable tradesmen, who are not members of the church to which the parties belong; and if it should afterwards appear that either party had violated the laws of God, or the spirit of the gospel, by their conduct towards each other, then to proceed according to the precepts of Christ, as they relate to matters either of *private offences*, or of *notorious crimes*. Had such a plan been pursued in the case above referred to, the churches would not have been disturbed by the disputes of two litigious men; the ministers would not have been subjected to reproach for exercising lordly domination; the church at Maidenhead-court would not have been convulsed and shaken by being divided into parties; and Mr. Bevois might not have been so strongly persuaded that all his princi-

ples as a Dissenter from the Church of England were without weight and importance.

Wednesday Lecture at Great Eastcheap.

In 1729, the year before Mr. Noble's death, a Wednesday-evening lecture was established at his place of worship by Dr. Gill, who continued to preach it alone till March 24, 1756, it being more convenient for such a purpose than his own place in Goat-street, Horselydown. While the place in Carter-lane was building, which was opened in 1767, the Doctor declined this lecture. The first sermon was from Ps. lxxi. 16; *I will go in the strength of the Lord God,* &c.; and the last from Acts xxvi. 23; *Having therefore obtained help of God,* &c. The last was published at the request of the society by whom the lecture was supported, and is entitled, "The Agreement of the Old and New Testaments." It was thus dedicated; "To my honoured and very much esteemed friend, Thomas Watson, Esq.* and the rest of my very worthy friends, the subscribers to the Wednesday evening lecture in Great Eastcheap, the following Discourse is humbly inscribed by their sincere Friend and Servant in Christ, John Gill."

"I chose the first text," says Dr. Gill, "when I undertook the lecture, partly to show that I engaged in this work not in my own strength, but in the strength of Christ, hoping for and

* Mr. Watson was a calico-printer, and a member of the church in Curriers'-hall, who made a point of having an open table for the Dissenting ministers of the three denominations on Tuesdays. Here many of them met, and Dr. Gill was generally with them, taking his part in cheerful conversation. After an early dinner they went to the respective Coffee-houses where their brethren assembled for business and social conversation. He died about the year 1770, and left to the Baptist Fund the sum of fifteen hundred pounds.

expecting the aid and assistance of his Spirit and grace; and partly to show that my intentions and resolutions were to preach that great and glorious doctrine of a sinner's free justification before God, by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, with all others that are analogous to it, or in connection with it; which Luther rightly called, *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ;* the article of the church standing or falling, or that by which it stands or falls; for as that doctrine is received or rejected, the church of Christ in all ages and periods of time flourishes or declines." At the close of the sermon the Doctor says, "And now, my friends, I call you to bear witness that these truths, and what have been briefly suggested in this discourse, have been what I have chiefly insisted upon in the course of this lecture; namely, the doctrines of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead; of the person and office of Christ; of the person and operations of the blessed Spirit; of special and distinguishing grace, as it appears in election, redemption, justification, adoption, regeneration, sanctification, and the final perseverance of the saints; with other doctrines which are in consequence of them, and in connection with them. And now I am about to take my leave of you and this lecture, and I do so, not through any dislike of the work I have been so long engaged in; not through any disgust at any thing I have met with; not through any discouragement for want of attendance or subscription; I have nothing to complain of; the lecture was never in better circumstance than it now is. But I find my natural strength will not admit me to preach so frequently, and with so much constancy, as I have done for many years past; being now in the decline of life, in the fortieth year of my ministry; so that it is time for me to have done with extra-service, I mean, service out of the church of which I am pastor. But a more powerful reason is, that I may have a little more time and leisure to attend to, and finish an arduous work upon my hands,—'An Exposition of the whole Old Testament;'

part of which work I shall immediately propose for publication; and if I meet with encouragement, the publishing of this will be an additional weight upon me; and I have no other way of easing myself, but by dropping the lecture; and these, and these only, are my reasons for so doing. And now as I would be, and am, thankful to the God of my life, who has given me so much health and strength, to carry on this lecture for such a course of years, with very little interruption for want of health; so I would, and do return thanks to you, my friends, who have so long encouraged and supported me with your presence and purse; and I heartily wish and pray, that you may be preserved from the prevailing errors of the times, and may be kept steadfast in the faith of the gospel, and abide by the truths and ordinances of it; and that the means of grace you attend upon, in season and out of season, here or elsewhere, may be blessed unto you for your comfort and edification; and *that you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and be made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*"

After Dr. Gill had retired from his lecture, where many of his published discourses were preached, Mr. Brine, and Mr. Stevens, conducted it jointly for a few years; after which, when Great Eastcheap meeting-house was given up, it was removed to Curriers'-hall, Cripplegate. There it was carried on for some time by Mr. Brine, Dr. Joseph Stennett, Mr. Burford, and Mr. Clark. The lecture was afterwards removed to Little St. Helen's, and from thence to Devonshire-square, when it was altered to Lord's-day evening. This was preached alone by Mr. Joseph Swain for several years. After his death it was carried on by various ministers for several years; then for a little time it was removed to the meeting-house in Prescot-street, where it wholly declined, and was finally relinquished about ten years since.

CHURCH IN GOODMAN'S-YARD, IN THE MINORIES.

THIS church in all probability owed its origin to the preaching of the Rev. Laurence Wise, who, during the civil wars, was the minister at Aldgate church. He was the parish minister at Chatham, being probably appointed to that station by the TRIERS in 1653. It was after this that he embraced the principles of the Baptists. He is mentioned in Dr. Calamy's account as being ejected from Chatham-dock, as a man of a learned education, and a Baptist, and as preaching to persons of that denomination for several years before his death. He further says, that "he was imprisoned in Newgate for his nonconformity in 1682, and died in 1692, about the seventieth year of his age."

Crosby says, "his congregation met latterly in Goodman's-yard in the Minories: Mr. John Travers* belonged to him, and had a great respect for him. When he was a prisoner for nonconformity, his friends raised fifty pounds, and put it into the hands of Mr. Travers to improve for his use. He was one of the five ministers King Charles II. sent for when he was granting liberty of conscience to the Dissenters."

From this statement it should seem that Mr. Wise and his brethren and fellow-sufferers Bampfylde, Ralphson, Griffiths, and Hercules Collins, all of the Baptist Denomination, speedily refused to admit the right of the king to exercise a dispensing power in matters of religion.

The records of the church in Petty France for 1691 mention Mr. Wise as living at that time. Several of its members

* This account was probably written by Mr. Benjamin Stinton, and not by Crosby. Mr. Travers was after this a respectable deacon of the church at Joiners'-hall.

united with that church, then under the care of Mr. William Collins.

It should seem from his having been sent for by the king, that he must have been a minister of distinction. He signed the letter published in vol. i. p. 420, addressed by the London ministers to Mr. Andrew Gifford of Bristol, in the year 1675, "On the duty of the unconverted to pray to God." This church did not unite in the General Assembly in 1689, nor in 1692: the reasons for this do not appear.

CHURCH IN CHURCH-LANE, LIMEHOUSE.

THIS meeting-house was situated in Church-lane, Limehouse. Mr. Leonard Harrison attended as its pastor, at the meetings of the General Assembly in 1689 and 1692. He assisted at the ordination of Mr. Thomas Harrison, at Lorimer's Hall, in 1699, and was perhaps a relation. He also attended the Assembly of Christian Churches in 1704. He probably died soon after 1705.

His successor was Mr. David Rees, of whom a few particulars only can be given. The following are taken from two letters, one written by the late Rev. Dr. William Richards of Lynn, and the other by Thomas Edwards, Esq.*

Mr. David Rees was born in South Wales. His father, Mr. Rees David, was a member of the church at Hingeod in the year 1701, when Mr. Morgan Griffiths undertook the pastoral care of that church. He is said to have been a very worthy person; a truly pious, active, intelligent Christian, and a zea-

* This gentleman, who is well known to the author, and much respected by him, is now in his 81st year, a member of the Baptist church at Southampton. He is the father of Dr. Edwards, of Doctors' Commons.

lous promoter of good order, practical piety, and evangelical discipline, among his fellow-members. He ranked among the middle class of the community, being by occupation a farmer; and, conducting his affairs with integrity and discretion, he obtained in no small degree the good opinion of his neighbours. He trained up his children *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, and God so graciously owned his pious labours, that most, if not all of them, became members of the church in Hengeod.

When this good man first commenced his religious course, it was a period of severe persecution; so that they were obliged to meet for worship in a wood, not far from the residence of Mr. Rees David, near Caerphilly. This place of seclusion was at length discovered; and, but for their neighbours giving them timely notice, they would have been all taken, a band of soldiers being sent to apprehend them. But though they escaped "bonds and imprisonments, they suffered the spoiling of their goods;" and could not meet for the service of God without imminent peril. In later times they ventured to build a meeting-house a great way up in the mountains, at a place called Cwm-y-Glo, (the Coal-cell). Afterwards they built the meeting-house at Hengeod, of which church, his father, and a great many of his family were members. The father of Rees David died in his 91st year.

Mr. David Rees of Limehouse was born in 1683. In his youth he discovered an early fondness for learning, which his father happily encouraged. It was advantageous for this young man, that in the immediate vicinity there was a very respectable seminary, kept at a farm-house called Brynllywarch, among the hills of Glamorgan; the principal tutor of which was the Rev. Samuel Jones, M. A. who had been ejected by the act of uniformity from the vicarage of Llangynwydd. Mr. Jones had been a fellow of Jesus College in Oxford: he kept an academy at Brynllywarch many years, till his death in 1697 or 1700. To this academy, where the children of some of the best families in

Wales were brought up, and where many eminent scholars finished their education, it was the happiness of Mr. Rees to be sent at an early age, and he probably staid there till his tutor's death. It is probable, therefore, from his promising parts and great thirst after learning, that he would at this seminary become well-grounded in classical and academical learning. We have not heard where he went after leaving Brynllywarch, but it appears that he made a profession of religion at an early period, and joined the church at Hengeod probably about 1701. His amiable disposition, excellent character, enlarged understanding, and uncommon acquirements, soon endeared him to his worthy pastor Morgan Griffiths, and the rest of his fellow-members; and he was very soon introduced by them to the work of the public ministry. His preaching met with general acceptance, and soon became the topic of conversation and applause far and near. The report of his very promising and extraordinary endowments reached London, and he very soon received a warm invitation to visit his brethren there. He appears to have removed to London about 1706; and, after preaching at different places with much acceptance, he received a pressing call to undertake the pastoral care of the church at Limehouse, which invitation, after due consideration, he accepted.

He was solemnly ordained to the pastoral office February 19, 1705-6. Mr. Joseph Stennett and Mr. John Piggott were engaged in that service. Mr. Stennett's sermon was published, founded upon Titus i. 5. Mr. Rees became a very eminent minister of the gospel, and a powerful defender of the sentiments of the Baptists.

In the year 1729 he was consulted by the church in Wild-street, in connection with Mr. Joseph Burroughs, as to the steps they should pursue in reference to Mr. Thomas Harrison, who they expected was about to conform to the church of En-

gland. He was soon after (Nov. 30, 1729) invited to preach for one year in the morning at Little Wild-street: whether he complied or not does not appear.

Mr. Rees was assisted for a little while by Mr. William Coombs, who died before him. In the funeral sermon for that young minister, Mr. Samuel Wilson thus speaks of the venerable surviving pastor:—"And surely my honoured friends, the members of this church, you must I think see the hand of the Lord upon you; to have one pastor confined by a painful disorder, so as to be almost dead to you, as to a capacity of service, for several years; and to have another just raised up, blessed a little, and then suddenly called home: it would be a very bad sign indeed if these things made no impression upon you. As the Lord shall help you, inquire carefully what may have provoked him; take care of drowsiness and barrenness, lest he should proceed to further severities; stir up one another to prayer, and entreat the Holy Spirit to enable you wisely to improve the means the Lord may yet provide for you: remember him who lately had in part the oversight of you, and endeavour to be followers of him in faith, zeal, and holiness, as far as he was a follower of Christ.

"And forgive, my dear brethren, the freedom, when I say, that if you were to be more instant as a church in prayer for your excellent pastor, who knows but the Lord might restore him, and make him a remarkable blessing among you?"

From this affecting statement we learn that Mr. Rees had been long prevented from labouring, and that his end appeared to be very nigh; and also that there had been a want of affection manifested towards him by the members of the church, and a decline in that spirituality and devotion for which the church had been distinguished.

Mr. Rees attended the Society of Ministers at Blackwall's Coffee-house, for the last time, April 24, 1733. It is probable

he died the beginning of the year 1734, as I find the Society of ministers agreeing, May 21, to have a meeting of prayer at Devonshire-square, on Wednesday the 29th inst. to begin at ten o'clock, and to end at two, "on account of the removal of several honourable and useful ministers."

Mr. Rees published a masterly work in 1734, entitled, "Infant Baptism no Institution of Christ; and the Rejection of it justified from Scripture and Antiquity: in answer to Mr. Fowler Walker's Book, entitled, A Defence of Infant Baptism, &c. To which are annexed, Animadversions on the Rev. Dr. Thomas Ridgeley's Dissertation on Infant Baptism." Octavo, pp. 290.

Mr. Aaron Spurrier, Jun. was the next pastor. He was a member of the church in Devonshire-square, where he was called to the ministry, and from which he was dismissed for the purpose of settling at Limehouse, in August 1747. His ministry was but of short continuance, as he died in about two years. Dr. Gill preached his funeral sermon from Phil. i. 23. Sept. 17, 1749. From this sermon we learn that Mr. Spurrier had the advantage of religious instruction from his childhood, his father being a minister of the word. His father dying when he was young, his pious mother brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Notwithstanding these instructions, he broke through his restraints, and, unknown to his mother, fell into the vices of the age. When his mind was illuminated by the Spirit of God, the remembrance of these things filled him with inexpressible horror and terror. His mind was at length relieved by the words of Christ to Peter being powerfully applied to his mind;—*I have prayed for thee; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.* From this he concluded, first, that he had an interest in the love of Christ's heart, and in his powerful and prevalent intercession; this eased him of his burden, and gave him comfort: and secondly, that he should become a preacher of the gospel to

others: he accordingly gave himself up to study the Scriptures, and to meditation and prayer. "Few young ministers," says Dr. Gill, "came forth with such seriousness and solidity, with such spirituality and experience, with such humility and modesty, with such fervency and affection, with such clearness of light and soundness of judgment, as he did, considering his years, and some disadvantages he laboured under. He was a burning and shining light, and his light was more and more increasing, which promised a great deal of usefulness in the church of God; and *ye for a season rejoiced in his light,* and it was but for a season, and a short season, too; a great deal of work was done by him among you in a little time, in the conversion of sinners, in the instruction of your minds, and the regulation of the discipline of the church."

Soon after his settlement, the meeting-house was repaired and application made to the public for assistance towards the expenses incurred; but this bright morning was soon overspread with clouds; the all-wise Disposer of events thought fit to lay his hand upon him, and to afflict him with a lingering illness, which laid him aside from his work for some time, and at last issued in death.

Dr. Gill states that he had visited Mr. Spurrier twice in his illness, "during which he was for the most part very comfortable in his soul. I found his faith in Christ, the first visit," says the Doctor, "very strong and steady; built upon the Rock of ages, the sure foundation God has laid in Zion; observing there was no other Saviour, or better foundation, to be proposed instead of him; to him he looked, on him he depended, in him he trusted, saying he could with pleasure reflect upon the doctrines he had taught others, as yielding to himself the most solid consolation on his dying bed. At my last visit, when he had sent for me, I perceived he had had a conflict with Satan; the enemy of souls had come in upon him like a flood, putting

him upon it to prove, that he ever knew what growth in grace was; which he not being able to answer at once, he was tempted to question whether he had experienced any work of grace at all. This threw him into great concern and distress, until the Lord was pleased to deliver him by a powerful application of these words,—*I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.* His soul was now filled brim-full of comfort, with a *joy unspeakable and full of glory*, which continued with him till the last moments, when he sweetly and easily, without a sigh or a groan, fell asleep in Jesus."

Thus, in the course of about six years, this church lost three pastors. Addressing the elder members and the *officers*, Dr. Gill exclaims, "An awful dispensation this! It should put you upon search and inquiry what should be the reason of the Lord's coming forth among you in this manner, and of his controversy with you; and it might be reasonably thought you would be saying one to another, 'Is there not an *Achan* in our camp?' and that every one would be putting the question which the disciples of Christ did in another case, '*Is it I? Is it I?*' Have you nothing to charge yourselves with? No disrespect to the doctrines of the gospel? No want of attendance on the ordinances of it? No negligence in the affairs of the church, and the discipline of it? No unsuitable and unbecoming walk and conversation in any of you? No declensions and backslidings among you, not taken notice of; and the laws of Christ against delinquents not put in execution? Something of this latter kind, I understand, was matter of concern with your late pastor, who, as I am told, has left you his dying charge. May this be of use unto you, to stir you up to be more active and diligent, to be *stedfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;* to recover backsliders, and bring them back to the fold, or to put you upon doing your duty to them."

It is evident that there are many implied censures in this faithful address, on account of the corrupt state of discipline in the church. Dr. Gill adds, however, "I understand you are a praying people, that there is a spirit of prayer of late among you; I rejoice to hear it; you may hope for a blessing, and expect it."

The church soon after called to the ministry, and afterwards to the pastoral office, one of its own members, Mr. Abraham Blount. He was received as an approved minister by the Society of Ministers, April 23, 1751. This union, it should appear, was not a comfortable one, as we find that very serious differences existed between the church and the pastor in August, 1759: how they terminated, I have no information.

Mr. James Larwell was settled as pastor here about this period, and continued till 1769.

Mr. Baskerville, who settled here about 1770, was the last minister of the ancient church at Limehouse. By what means it was reduced so greatly from the state of prosperity it enjoyed during the ministry of Mr. David Rees, is not exactly known; but it is probable that it was owing to the want of a scriptural and holy discipline. It is affecting that so many intimations of the Saviour's displeasure should have produced no salutary effect. This instance furnishes another practical comment upon our Lord's threatening to the church at Sardis;—*If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee,* Rev. iii. 3.

The poor of this church received from Mr. Hollis's gift to the Baptist fund until the year 1774, after which I find nothing respecting it; whence I conclude that its dissolution took place in that year. Mr. Baskerville was afterwards settled at Hartford, and lived to a very old age in that city till his death.

The old meeting-house is mentioned in Maitland's list, in 1739. It was taken down about fifty years ago, and some of

the materials employed in erecting the Independent meeting-house in Rose-lane, Poplar.*

CHURCH AT AYLE'S-STREET AND ANGEL-ALLEY.

CROSBY, speaking of Mr. Elias Keach, of whom some account is given vol. ii. p. 467, says, "He erected a large meeting-house in Goodman's-fields." This was in Ayle's [Alie, or Ayliffe] Street, and, I conjecture, was that which for many years belonged to the Presbyterians, till Socinianism had wasted the congregation, and which, a few years since, was taken by Mr. Bailey, a Baptist.

Mr. Keach first settled at Curriers'-hall, where he collected a considerable church. In the year 1696 he published a "Century" of Hymns, entitled, "A Banqueting-house full of Spiritual Delights." This is dedicated "To the Sheep and Lambs of Christ, meeting at Curriers'-hall, London, over whom I am an unworthy under-shepherd," &c. dated "from my study in Blue Anchor-alley, Bunhill-fields, on the 11th of the second month, 1696."

It must have been soon after this that Mr. Keach and his church removed to Tallow-chandlers'-hall. The next year I find him publishing a work, entitled, "The Glory and Ornament of a true Gospel-constituted Church; being a brief Display of the Discipline of the Church of Christ formerly meeting at Curriers'-hall, near Cripplegate, and now meeting at Tallow-chandlers'-hall, upon Dowgate-hill, London, Elias Keach, pastor, 1697." It gives a very judicious representation of the order of a congregational church, and leads one to conclude that the church which would approve of such a model, must have been in a high degree of spiritual prosperity.

* Private information.

On leaving this place they removed to Ayliffe-street. It is very remarkable that Crosby, who was his brother-in-law, should have stated, in another part of his work, that Mr. Keach was pastor of a church at Wapping, as it is very certain he never was, unless indeed he preached at Gravel-lane meeting, while the place in Aylie-street was building. His character, on some account, was greatly aspersed, and his life made bitter. But his course was quickly run; he died October 27, 1699, in the thirty-fourth year of his age.

His funeral sermon was preached, and afterwards published, by Mr. Nathaniel Wyles, pastor of a church of Christ in Paul's, Shadwell. The text is Isaiah lvii. 1; *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come.* The title, "The Saint's Deliverance by Death from the Evil to Come." This is very respectfully dedicated "To Mr. Benjamin Keach, Father, and to Mrs. Mary Keach, the sorrowful Widow," as follows: "Honoured sir, and madam, I heartily condole your loss. It is no small affliction to you, sir, to lose your only son; and for you, madam, to lose so dear and loving a husband," &c. There is another "Epistle Dedicatory;—to the church of Christ meeting in Ayle's-street, Goodman's-fields, over whom Mr. Elias Keach was lately overseer: the blessed increase of all grace on earth, and the fulness of all glory in heaven, be your portion here and hereafter," &c. "The loss you have lately sustained is great; the good Lord sanctify it and make it up to you; the prophets do not live for ever. Zech. i. 5."

In this sermon Mr. Wyles gives a few incidental hints respecting Mr. Keach's end. "Prepare," says he, "to follow him who is gone a little before you. He was likely, within some months, to have lived many years; but he is gone, and cut off in the noon time of age."

It appears too, that he died very happy. Mr. Wyles having

remarked that "the righteous have peace of conscience, which flows from peace with God," says, "And let me tell you, this is worth more than a world: in a dying hour *his* end must needs be happy and in peace, that hath a smiling God, and a smiling conscience, when he comes to die. John tells us, that *he who believes has the witness in himself,* 1 John v. 10. His conscience speaks peace to him from the Spirit's testimony, and is the rejoicing of his soul when he comes to die. *This is our rejoicing,* says Paul, *the testimony of a good conscience,* 2 Cor. i. 12. This was our deceased brother's comfort and rejoicing upon his death bed, as he declared to us. 'A good conscience,' says one, 'is a paradise, and the foretaste of heaven.' He that dies with peace of conscience, flowing from peace and reconciliation with God, flies to heaven, as Noah's dove to the ark, with the olive branch of peace in his mouth: he dies in peace, and enters into peace. But it is not thus with the wicked; he lives in peace, but dies in a storm; *Terrors take hold upon him as waters; a tempest stealeth him away in the night, and as a stone hurleth him out of his place,* Job xxvii. 20."

In addressing the members of the church, who appear to have been young people, and newly collected, "You in this church are, as it were, but lambs," says Mr. Wyles; "but remember Christ will take care of you: he doth not only take care to feed his sheep, but also that his lambs may be fed. Look well to your choice. Take the Holy Ghost's advice, 1 Tim. v. 22,—*Lay hands suddenly on no man.* See that he whom you shall choose be saved in the faith, and is of good repute among men. Let judgment rule in your choice, and not foolish affection. Seek the Lord earnestly about it, and pray that you may have a man after God's own heart, one that may revive and carry on the cause of God among you, and may be instrumental of adding to this church, which was gathered by him now deceased. He was a man of good natural parts,

which is known to many who have talked and conversed with him. There have been many things laid to his charge by some; but he declared, upon his dying bed, that he could appeal to God and a good conscience upon those matters wherein he was charged with gross sins. He told me 'he was going to his God, and my God; to his Father, and my Father;' and also told me, 'he had by faith laid hold on a sure foundation, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by it saw that glory which he was going to.' He said also, 'he should go swimming to heaven in the cleansing fountain and streams of the blood of Jesus.' Being concerned for his family, he was satisfied with this, that 'God was an everlasting Father, who dies not.' I instanced to him the words of good David, the day before he died,—*When my flesh and my heart fail, thou art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever,* Ps. lxxiii. 26; and said, 'I hope, dear brother Keach, you, through grace, can say this.' He being speechless, and not able to speak to me, lifted up his hand immediately to heaven, to satisfy me, and them that were about him, that, through grace, he could say so. He resolved to rest and rely upon Christ and his righteousness alone for life and salvation; that Jesus whom he had preached to others, he trusted alone in for justification and eternal life. How instrumental he was in bringing souls to Christ, I need not mention. Here are many in this place who can call him father, and bless God that they ever saw his face or heard his voice. He preached the gospel in foreign parts with great success, and was instrumental in planting two churches there, and gathering one here. But now he's gone, his work is done, he'll never preach more, nor we shall ever hear him more. He hath preached in this pulpit to the conviction of some, and to the comfort of many: but now he's gone, he's gone, we shall see his face no more, and hear that lovely voice of his no more. Oh death! what hast thou done? to cut off such an one, who hath often warmed our hearts, and charmed our ears, and fed

our souls with wholesome food. What! must we see his face no more? hear his sweet heart-affecting voice no more? What, death! hast thou deprived us of his company? Must we enjoy him no more here? Well, death, thou hast done thy worst; he hath overcome thee, the last enemy to be destroyed, (1 Cor. xv. 26,) and has taken his flight to mansions above: and while he is there singing hallelujahs, with a crown of glory upon his head, and palms in his hands, as tokens of honour and victory, we would be affected with this stroke, and lay it to heart; for *the righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart,*" &c.

It is not said where he was buried; but it appears that Mr. Wyles delivered an oration at the grave, which, with a funeral hymn, is appended to the sermon. An elegy was also printed with the sermon, but that I have not yet seen.

In the month of October, just before his death, Mr. Keach published two sermons. These are entitled "A Discourse of the Nature and Excellency of the Grace of Patience, delivered in two sermons by Elias Keach, preached just upon his present sore and great afflictions. London: printed for the Author, 1699." To these sermons his friend, Mr. Nathaniel Wyles, prefixed an address to the reader, dated "Shadwell, Oct. 2, 1699," about three weeks before Mr. Keach's death.

As this is creditable to the character of Mr. Keach, and contains some historical incidents which will throw some further light upon his character, I shall transcribe it.

"The author of these sermons is well known in this city and nation, as also in foreign countries; in which places he has been the instrument of doing much good to souls, and of planting several churches. There be many who can call him father, who were begotten under his ministry, and are blessing God that they ever saw his face, and heard his voice. Great work has been done, even in this city, by him; but now God has afflicted him, and we fear will call him home. He has had

great and long work for patience, of which he has had a great measure; he has been quiet under the load, eyeing the hand of God in all his trials. He has looked more to God's hand and design in suffering him so greatly to be afflicted, than at the rage of Satan, and the malice of men, who have been the instruments of a great part of his trials.

"This servant of God hath been sufficiently judged and condemned by many, though I am satisfied unjustly. But it is not he whom man condemns that is condemned, but such as God condemns. Our dear Lord Jesus tells us, Matt. v. 9, 10, *Blessed are they that suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, and have all manner of evil spoken against them falsely for his sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* It is no matter what we suffer here from men, so it be but falsely, and for Christ's sake; for the kingdom and crown of heaven is weighty enough to make amends for all. The cross is the way to the crown; for they that suffer with and for Christ here, shall reign with him hereafter in glory, Rom. viii. 19.

"'Tis sad to hear how he hath been reproached, though there are many know it is unjustly, and have cleared him; but none like to that testimony which now on his sick bed he declares he has in his own conscience. Who can stand before envy?

"Reader, I shall detain thee no longer from what follows; but desire that God may bless it, and make it of great and good use to thy soul. I subscribe myself

Your servant for Christ's sake,

N. WYLES."

The sermons of Mr. Keach are founded upon James i. 4; *But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.* To give the reader a specimen of the argument and style, I make an extract from the first sermon, p. 7. "The third branch of this description, when patience hath her perfect work, is, bearing up against the billows of

opposition and affliction. 'Tis no hard matter to be quiet and patient when in peace and without trouble; for a man to have a competent satisfaction while all things run smoothly, and according to his heart's desire; while a man sits under his own vine and fig-tree, while the clusters hang thereon; to sail delightfully in a calm and smooth sea; to be satisfied when he abounds with this world's good; and contented when none oppose him and seek his hurt; to have a multitude of potent friends, and but a few impotent adversaries: for such a one to be patient argues not that he hath grace, but that he is in his fool's paradise, settled upon the lees of carnal comforts according to his sensual wishes. But let God strip him of these, his heart like Nabal's will die within him; he hath lost his heaven, and drops down into his hell. When outward peace is taken away from a man, that he cannot turn himself to the right hand or to the left, but he beholds himself encompassed with troubles and black clouds of darkness; when all things run awkwardly and contrary to his carnal expectations; and he is frustrated and disappointed in all his attempts and designs; for a man then to bear up, argues him to be a gracious person, and one that hath resigned himself up to God and his conduct. And when he hath his outward supplies taken from him, and he is changed from a plentiful and prosperous to a poor and mean condition and estate in the world, and is constrained to be beholden to them that have been as his servants feeding at his table; now to be quiet, and not changed in his temper, although his condition be thus changed, argues truth of grace. Yea, when a man's former friends are metamorphosed into adversaries; yea, intimate friends into open enemies, and they that he laid in his bosom seek to tear out his heart, and ruin him in his name and reputation in the world; and when he has given them no provocation so to do, and he hath not a few but a multitude of enemies, and them potent and strong, having great advantages to injure him, and but a very few weak and impotent friends,

who, though they have a will, yet have not power and ability to help and support him; no not so much as skill and judgment to counsel and direct him in his extremities: I say, for such a one to endure all this quietly, without tossing or flinging in his spirit, argues him patient; and not only to have truth of grace, but strength of grace. Surely he that bears up against all these billows of opposition, trouble, and affliction, must be a growing Christian, and one that hath everlasting arms underneath to support; for when creature-comforts are taken from him he would sink, had he no refuge to fly into in this his distressed condition; such a one is like-minded with the prophet, Heb. iii. 17, *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom,*" &c.

The writer is not acquainted with the nature of the reproaches that had been cast upon the character of Mr. Keach; to the painful effects of which on his circumstances and his reputation he doubtless refers in the above extract. But when it is known that his venerable father was not shielded from the foul tongue of slander by his long life of useful labours, it will not much be wondered at that his son, who had been but a few years in the ministry, and who had been previously to his conversion very profligate, should have been exposed to its venomous tooth.

Mr. Elias Keach appears to have been very popular and useful. About 130 persons united in church-fellowship within nine months after he began preaching at Curriers'-hall. He was one of the ministers who supplied the Lord's-day morning lecture at Pinners'-hall, where he often had 1500 hearers. He published four sermons, delivered at that lecture, on Justification, besides the Treatise on Discipline, and the sermons on Patience.

The church appears to have been left in very afflicted circumstances. The conclusion of Mr. Wyles's sermon is very striking: "I shall now conclude with Moses' prayer, Numb. xxvii. 16, 17. *Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may*

bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd."

A good engraving of this minister is in the possession of Mr. Chapman Barber, of Chancery-lane, who married one of the descendants of the excellent Mr. Benjamin Keach.

Mr. John Nichols, it appears, succeeded Mr. Keach, but I know nothing further concerning him; the church, however, in 1703, was in connection with the regular churches.

In 1709, I find a Mr. Congrove mentioned as pastor of a church in Goodman's-fields.

Some time before the year 1715 they had removed to a new meeting-house in Angel-alley: the place is mentioned in Maitland's list in 1739, as belonging to the Baptists.

Mr. Edward Ridgeway was ordained over the church in Angel-alley, October 20, 1715; but I do not find any mention of him before the year 1718, when the church under his care raised fifty pounds, and became united with the Baptist Fund; Mr. Sky was introduced as a messenger by Mr. Ridgeway. His name is not with those who attended the Conference at Salters'-hall in 1719; but I find him associated with the Particular Baptist Ministers in 1723. The church appears to have been small, from the amount of the annual collection for the fund. Mr. Ridgeway was returned to the General Body, as an approved minister in 1727, 1732, and 1737. In 1749 he was reported to that body as deceased. His church ceased from belonging to the fund in 1729, and his name does not appear with those of the society of ministers at the Coffee-house after that time.

There was a Mr. John Ridgeway among the London ministers, in 1734, who was at that time a member of the Society at the Coffee-house. He was probably a son of Mr. Edward Ridgeway. I find also that in 1757 a hundred pounds were given to the Baptist Fund by a Rev. Mr. Ridgeway. As the former died in 1749, this in all likelihood was the latter person.

The place of worship at Ayle's-street, was occupied by a Mr.

Cudworth, who was a Pædobaptist minister. He distinguished himself by writing in defence of the sentiments on faith contained in Mr. Hervey's work, entitled, "Theron and Aspasio."

CHURCH AT SHADWELL.

THE place in St. Paul's, Shadwell, was, I conjecture, built by the influence of Mr. Benjamin Keach, soon after the Revolution. It was one of the associated churches in 1704 and and 1705, when Mr. NATHANIEL WYLES attended as its pastor, and Messrs. John Brand and Caleb Hooker as deacons. Mr. Wyles has been mentioned as publishing a funeral sermon for Mr. Elias Keach: I know nothing further about him nor of the church.

CHURCH IN PRESCOT-STREET.

THE meeting-house is situated in Little Prescot-street, Goodman's fields, and was erected in 1730, for the church formerly meeting in Old Gravel-lane, Wapping. It is a good building, with three galleries, and a commodious vestry, but without a baptistery, a thing uncommon in the present day. The church was separated from the first Particular Baptist church formed in London. Crosby says, "They were part of that ancient flourishing church which met in Broad-street, Wapping, who, with Mr. Samuel Wilson, who is now [1740*]

* This is evidently a mistake. The meeting-house in Broad-street, in Maitland's list, in 1739, was reckoned an Independent place: the Baptist church was in Johnson's-street, Old Gravel-lane.

the elder of the baptized church in Goodman's fields, came off from them, and built that new meeting-house of which they are now possessed. The remaining part continued some years together; but labouring under many difficulties, were in the end necessitated to dissolve their church state."

It appears, however, that the major part of the church left with Mr. Wilson. Dr. Gill, in the funeral sermon preached for that excellent minister, addresses them as "the church, who, being destitute of a pastor, had called him to take the pastoral care over them." Dr. Gill would not have thus addressed them, had they been the minority. Mr. Wilson settled with them about the year 1724, and continued at Wapping until they removed with him to Goodman's-fields in 1730.

Mr. Wilson was descended from godly protestant Dissenting ministers, both by his father's and mother's side. It is not known who were his maternal progenitors. Mr. Ebenezer Wilson, pastor of the church in Walbrook, was his father; and Mr. John Wilson, an eminent minister at Hitchin, in Hertfordshire, was his grandfather. He had received a religious and liberal education. His grammatical and classical learning was derived from the instructions of Dr. Hay, an eminent clergyman in London, and Professor Ward, of Gresham College. His academical studies were prosecuted under the direction of Dr. Ridgley and Mr. Eames. He made a great proficiency in polite and useful literature; and being thus furnished, after engaging in the ministry, he became a shining and distinguished character both in the church and the world.

During his infancy and youth, he was favoured with many providential preservations and deliverances. He several times, when bathing, nearly escaped drowning, was exposed to imminent danger by the bloody flux, and was cut near the eye by a cat-stick. Accounts of these preservations, indicating the special care of Providence over him, he committed to writing, considering them as proofs of God's having saved him while in

his unregenerate state, for the purpose of calling him, by his grace, to reveal his Son in him, and to put him into the ministry. He received his first serious impressions under the preaching of the Rev. Daniel Wilson, an eminent Presbyterian minister of Monkwell-street chapel.

In the funeral sermon which Mr. Wilson preached for Mr. Wilcox in Monkwell-street, May 20, 1733, and which he also published, he gives this account of his conversion:—"It was here, in this place, among you, under the ministry of your late most useful and affectionate pastor, that I received (if my heart deceives me not) the first serious impressions. And for several years, with the greatest pleasure, and I trust some advantage, I made one of the throng who crowded after him."

Mr. Wilson's father dying while he was young, he was placed under the care of persons who were Pædobaptists. After his conversion he began to consider the subject of baptism, and he says that no one could have entered upon it with a more earnest desire to find truth on the side of the common practice; that his connections and prospects led him strongly to incline to Pædobaptism; but that having collected all the scriptures usually adduced upon that subject, and seriously considered their natural meaning, he was obliged to conclude that the balance of argument was greatly on the side of adult baptism by immersion. Being soon after baptized by Mr. Edward Wallin, he joined the church at Maze-pond, while he was pursuing his academical studies under Dr. Ward. He was now about twenty years of age, and when he left Gresham College, with the entire approbation of the members of the church he was called forth to the work of the ministry, and began preaching with great acceptance to the public.

About the year 1721, the Rev. John Noble, of Tallow-chandlers'-hall, having arrived at old age, and needing an assistant, Mr. Wilson accepted an invitation to that office. An evening lecture was established, where he preached to a crowded

audience. "He came forth," says Dr. Gill, "even at first, with clear evangelical light, with great warmth, zeal, and fervency of spirit, and, like another Apollos, with a torrent of eloquence, being mighty in the Scriptures: all which things recommended him to all sorts of people, and made him exceedingly popular."

It was about the year 1724, that he was invited to settle with the church in Old Gravel-lane, Wapping; and was ordained over them as their pastor. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Gill, Mr. Edward Wallin, and many others, taking part in that solemn service. It is not said what was the cause of his leaving Wapping to settle in Prescot-street, and of the division which took place in the church. Some of the members objected to a new place of worship being erected, and were resolved rather to lose a faithful minister, than leave an old meeting-house. However it was, part only of the church accompanied him to Goodman's-fields.

While Mr. James Foster was preaching his popular Socinian lectures, at the Old Jewry, in 1740, Mr. Samuel Wilson was preaching at Tallow-chandlers'-hall, on the west side of Dowgate-street, a course of sermons from the same texts. It is said, some of his friends took turns to hear Mr. Foster, and would then inform Mr. Wilson how he treated his subject, when he would be sure to handle the same text the next Lord's-day evening, exposing and confuting his errors.*

During the last twenty years of his life, the church, which was in a "low estate," at the opening of the new meeting-house, increased abundantly, and was very flourishing. His ministry was greatly owned to the conversion of many sinners, and to the comfort and edification of the whole church, both of those who survived him,* and of many who went to glory be-

* Private information.

† Mr. William Taylor, the beneficent founder of the Baptist Acade-

fore him. His popularity continued until the end of his life; and, notwithstanding several breaches had been made in the church, it was at the time of Mr. Wilson's death, Oct. 6, 1750, in a very prosperous condition.

Mr. Wilson's publications were—1. A Scripture Manual: or a Plain Representation of the Ordinance of Baptism; designed for the use of all who would answer a good conscience towards God, and give a reason of their faith and practice with meekness and fear. This admirable tract was written not long before his death, thirty years after he had been baptized. It has been repeatedly printed, and within a few years past has been translated into French.—2. A Sermon occasioned by the Death of Mr. Edward Chamberlain, late Master of the Charity-school, Shakespeare's-walk, preached to the Society who support it, March 19, 1732.—3. God's Compassion to an Ungrateful People; a Sermon preached at the Rev. Mr. Ridgeley's Meeting-place, near Thames-street, April 6, 1732. This is dedicated to "Thomas Brumsall, Esq. one of his Majesty's Justices's of the Peace for the county of Bedford."—4. A Sermon occasioned by the Death of the Rev. William Arnold, 1734, from Luke vii. 37.—5. A Sermon preached to the Societies for Reformation of Manners, at Salters'-hall, 1734, from Titus ii. 11, 12.—6. The Blessing of a Gospel Ministry; a Sermon preached in Monkwell-street Meeting-place, May 20, 1733, occasioned by the Death of the Rev. Daniel Wilcox, from Acts xx. 38.—7. A Sinner justified by the Righteousness of Christ; a Sermon preached at the Lord's-day Evening Lecture, at Silver-street, August 14, 1743; published at the Request of the Young Gentlemen who support the Lecture.—8. A Sermon, addressed to the Church, preached at the Ordination of the Rev. George Braithwaite, M. A. March 28, 1734. This was published at the request of several mi-

mical Institution, at Stepney, in 1811, was one of the last persons whom Mr. Wilson baptized.

nisters, with Dr. Gill's sermon on the same occasion, addressed to the ministers. The whole was entitled, "The Mutual Duty of Pastor and People." These discourses had been previously preached, July 26, 1733, at the ordination of the Rev. William Morton, at Glass-house-street, Westminster. In the preface they say, that they had preached the sermons a second time at the request of several persons, and had published them at their desire. "We are far," say they, "from designing by this to dictate to the ministers or churches; but it is certain there are duties incumbent on both, which are too much neglected in this day of degeneracy, in which the ministerial work is by many too slightly discharged, and the respect which ought to be paid by professors to the faithful labourers in Christ's vineyard is too little attended to."

One extract from Mr. Wilson's sermon may be considered as a specimen of his style and manner. It relates to the duty of the people, "to provide for their minister, according as God had blessed them, with cheerfulness and generosity."—"Ministers are such who have had what the world calls a regular education; that is, have been brought up from their childhood at school, and have spent a proper time at the academy or university, the better to fit, prepare, and qualify them to teach and instruct others: or, they are persons who being taken notice of by the church as eminent for grace and gifts, are by them desired to quit their secular employments, and to give themselves wholly to study, reading, prayer, and preaching the word. As to the former, I mean a learned ministry, to me it is more than probable, had the same time, care, and diligence, which ministers are obliged to employ in the painful pursuit of theological studies, been laid out about law, physic, merchandize, or any other gainful calling; they had been as likely, under a common blessing, to have gained reputation, and to have made, or enlarged their fortunes, as the rest of mankind. For a proof of this, let it be remembered, we have

seen, in our day, gentlemen of the first character, who have shone at the bar and on the bench, and adorned the college, who had spent several years in the study of divinity, and who were not only designed for, but some of them, for a time, have appeared in the pulpit as preachers of the gospel.

"If some then, from a zeal for God's honour, and a hearty concern for the welfare of immortal souls, are willing to deny themselves, and forego the advantages which they might otherwise expect, in common with the rest of mankind, how unreasonable and disingenuous is it, that the very persons for whom they are acting thus, should think much of allowing them all due and proper encouragement! And as to such who leave their secular callings, as it is, or ought to be, by the advice and desire of the church, so when that is the case, it becomes unrighteous, as well as ungrateful, not to allow them a competency for the maintenance and support of their families."

After Mr. Wilson's death, a volume of his sermons, on various subjects and occasions, was published; two of which, entitled, "Of efficacious Grace," were published in his life time; the rest were taken from his manuscripts. These amount to eighteen, and were prepared for the press by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Stennett, of Little Wild-street.

Mr. Wilson's funeral oration was delivered by the Rev. Dr. Stennett, in the burial-ground at Bunhill-fields, Oct. 12, 1750. From this eloquent address we select the following as descriptive of the character of Mr. Wilson.

"The reverend and excellent person whose grave we surround, was descended from a line of ancestors, both on his father's and his mother's side, among whom were several very worthy ministers of the gospel. He had so happy a texture of mind, such fine natural parts, and was so very early imbued with remarkable evidences of a divine work upon his soul, as led his religious friends, in his tender years, to hope that hea-

ven had pointed him out for the service of the sanctuary; and time soon made it appear that they were not mistaken.

"Prepared with suitable study, adorned with useful literature, stocked with spiritual experience, warmed with zeal for God, and love to the souls of men, and richly furnished with the unction from above, he came forth into his sacred work; and approved himself an able teacher of others, at a time of life, when but few enter upon a public profession of religion themselves. He was favoured with an healthful constitution; a constitution which was hardly ever much shaken with any disease, till that which brought him hither. His industry was suited to it. And such was the sweetness and benevolence of his temper, that, as it readily engaged him in offices of kindness to others, though frequently attended with much labour and fatigue to himself; so it seldom suffered him to be ruffled with resentment at any ungrateful treatment he met with in return. With all these happy talents, he soon became a very popular and successful preacher. And that this popularity was not the effect of novelty, and superficial attainments, appears, in that it was not only the blaze of a few months or a year, as is often the case, but it continued with him through the whole course of his ministry; so that, by the blessing of God on his labours, he raised a congregation from low circumstances, to become one of the most flourishing in this city. And he discharged his pastoral office with that seriousness, prudence, and temper, as was attended with such a series of increase and harmony, as few communities have, for so long a time, enjoyed.

"But neither honourable descent, neither genius, nor learning, neither the ornaments of nature, nor of grace, neither love to God, nor love to men, nor faith, nor usefulness will, we see, secure the continuance of men here beyond the limits of the divine decree. Not the art of medicine, nor the aching hearts of kindred and of friends, not the tears and groans of a large and a beloved flock, nor the fervent prayers of fellow-

labourers in the same service, can respite the commission, when the hour is come: for it is the just and reasonable appointment of the great Disposer of all things, that man should die; and there is no discharge in this war.

"What makes the stroke the more feeling, is that he is removed from us at a time, when the growth of the most destructive errors, the increase of every kind of wickedness, and the sad and general decay of vital religion among good men themselves, seem to render the continuance of persons of remarkable piety and abilities, of very great consequence to the best interest in the world. And it is still the more affecting, that he bowed his head in the midst of his strength, and when a large treasure of experience, and great ripeness of judgment, gave us encouraging hopes of his growing usefulness, for many years to come; and that his life also should, at such a time as this, become a sacrifice to the zeal of his heart, and the fatigues of his work. These are some of the mysteries of providence, which though we understand not now, will be unfolded hereafter."

The Rev. Dr. John Gill preached and published his funeral sermon, founded upon Acts xx. 38; the same text which Mr. Wilson himself had improved about seven years before, at the funeral of the Rev. Daniel Wilcox. It is very apparent that Dr. Gill felt a great respect and affection for Mr. Wilson. He says, "To give you the character of my deceased brother, and your pastor, I want the eloquence of the deceased to paint him out in his proper colours, and to describe him as the accomplished man, the real Christian, and the excellent minister.—His natural parts were very quick and strong; he had a great vivacity of spirit, a lively fancy and imagination, a retentive memory, a penetrating mind, and a solid judgment; which, with the advantages of literature, and, above all, the grace of God bestowed upon him, and spiritual light, and knowledge given him in the mysteries of the gospel, made him the great

man he was. That he was truly a partaker of the grace of God, was not only the judgment of the church to whom he first gave up himself, but will easily be admitted by all good men that have known him, heard him, or read his works. And it was your happiness as a church, that you had such a minister, who himself had tasted that the Lord was gracious. An unregenerate ministry has been the bane of the established church, and is like to be the ruin of the protestant dissenting interest.

"Need I describe him as a preacher to you, who, at least many of you, have so long sat under his ministry?—His mien and deportment in the pulpit were grave and venerable; his gesture graceful; his address very moving and pathetic; his language striking; his discourses spiritual, savoury, and evangelical; having a tendency to awaken the minds of sinners to a sense of sin and danger, and to relieve and comfort distressed minds: he was indeed an eloquent preacher, and a warm defender of the peculiar doctrines of the Christian religion; and, in one word, laborious, indefatigable, and successful; not a loiterer, but a labourer in the Lord's vineyard; as in his public work, so in the more private duties of his office, visiting the church and members of it, without respect of persons; fervent in his prayers for them, and with them; hearty in his advice unto them, and unwearied in doing any service for them he undertook. And let me not forget his conduct at your church-meetings, where he presided, becoming his character and office; what authority he used when necessary; what prudence in all things; what patience in bearing with the infirmities of the weak, and it may be sometimes the rudeness of some, and the invectives of others; what lenity to offenders; what compassion to backsliders; what reluctance to pass the awful sentence on the incorrigible, and with what tears in prayer he would weep over such unhappy professors!

"His gift in prayer was very remarkable and extraordinary; with what fulness of matter, freedom of mind, and fervour of

spirit, as well as pertinency of expression, and propriety of language, would he pour out his soul before God, and wrestle with him; what a compass would he fetch, and reach every case, both private and public; and not only express the sense of his own heart, but that of others that joined with him, in a better and fuller manner, than they could do it for themselves.

"He was affable and courteous in his behaviour to all men, of a cheerful spirit, his conversation pleasant, profitable, entertaining, and useful; which made him generally beloved by all sorts of persons. In social life, he was the tender husband, the affectionate father, and the faithful friend."

This eminently distinguished minister was cut off in the midst of his days, as he had not completed his forty-eighth year when his Master and Lord said unto him, *Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer steward.* The state of his mind in this last illness is thus described by Dr. Gill:—

"He was seized at first with such a stupor as rendered him very little conversible during the whole time; so that nothing of his gracious experience could be taken from him, only some broken words and expressions now and then were dropped by him, which shewed him to be in a spiritual frame: but from a small manuscript, written by him in health, I shall give a few extracts, in which he not only expresses his sense of mercies, temporal and spiritual, but observes the gracious dealings of God with him, and his experience of his divine favour. 'I have had,' says he, 'many sweet visits of his love, especially in secret, and at his table. God, in Christ,' adds he, 'I hope is my portion, his providence my defence, and his good Spirit my guide and comforter.' And in another place, he expresses his sense of the corruption of his heart, the infirmities of his life, his faith and hope in a bleeding Saviour, and his desires after unspotted purity and holiness; he complains of 'a pol-

luted, proud, peevish heart, prone to atheism, folly, and every evil;—and of a life tarnished with many blemishes, sad indiscretions, and heart-breaking ingratitude:—surely,' says he, 'God hath hardly done more for any, nor any left to do more against him!'—then expresses a hope limited to a bleeding Mediator,—and concludes, 'Blessed day, that will bring perfect purity!' Which day is come to him, and has brought it to him."

There is a good portrait of Mr. Wilson prefixed to his sermons. Another was published in the Baptist Magazine, copied from the above.

This church was indeed a prosperous vine during the period of Mr. Wilson's ministry, *a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall.* His labours were the honoured means of training up many, and some of them eminent men, for the ministry in our churches. The following is a list of those who were called out to the public ministry, by the church in Prescot-street, while Mr. Wilson was its pastor. —John Haden, 1736.—Benjamin Beddome, 1740, the excellent pastor of Bourton-upon-the-water.—Meredith Townsend, 1741: he became a Pædobaptist in 1743, and was chosen assistant to Mr. Price, successor to Dr. Watts in Bury-street.—William Coombs, 1741, co-pastor with Mr. David Rees, of Limehouse.—John Needham, 1745, pastor of the church at Hitchin, Herts.—Josiah Thompson, 1745, after Mr. Wilson's death pastor of the church in Unicorn-yard.—Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Llewellin, 1747, a very learned man, and a treasurer of the Baptist Fund.—Abraham Clark, 1754.—Samuel James, 1754, pastor of the church at Hitchin, author of "Remarkable Experiences," &c.

The church in Prescot-street was destitute for upwards of four years. It was difficult to find a suitable pastor, as it is often in our churches, especially after the decease or removal

of a minister who has been greatly esteemed. The first minister they thought of was Mr. John Tommas, afterwards the worthy pastor of the church in the Pithay, Bristol. He had preached at Prescot-street on the morning of the Lord's day that Dr. Gill preached the funeral sermon for Mr. Wilson in the afternoon. His subject was Rev. i. 18.—*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.* Many of the people appear to have been desirous that he should have been invited to preach upon probation; but there were others who thought him not sufficiently gifted and accomplished to succeed their late pastor. Mr. Benjamin Beddome, jun. who was pastor of the church at Bourton-upon-the-water, was very strongly solicited by the deacons to supply the congregation with a view to the pastoral office. The people seem to have been unanimous respecting him as a suitable person, provided the church at Bourton would agree to part with him; but that consent could not be obtained, and Mr. Beddome would not act without it. Mr. Hugh Evans, at that time an assistant to Mr. Bernard Foskett, was invited at the request of the whole church, and he was inclined to comply; but the death of his wife just at the time, and his not being willing to remove with a small family, prevented him. After this Mr. Tommas came to London about business, and preached at Maze-pond and Little Wild-street; and this led to a wish, on the part of a majority of the members of Prescot-street church, that he might be invited for three months; but the deacons refused to write a letter of invitation. The people, however, sent a letter; but the want of unanimity was so evident, that Mr. Tommas would not attend to it; but immediately after accepted an invitation from the church at the Pithay. Mr. Reynolds, who afterwards settled at Cripplegate, preached six weeks upon probation. All the ministers above mentioned were very distinguished men for

talents and usefulness, and spent their lives usefully in the stations from which there had been such attempts made to remove them. *There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand,* Prov. xix. 21. *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps,* Jer. x. 23.

About Christmas, 1752, a Mr. James Fall, jun. son of Mr. Fall, pastor of the Baptist church at Watford, and who had been called to preach by Dr. Gill's church in 1752, was invited to preach among them; and after supplying the church about five months, he was invited unanimously to preach for six months as a probationer for the pastoral office. At the expiration of that time, it was proposed, at a church meeting, that the sense of the church should be taken, whether Mr. Fall should be called to the pastoral office, when it appeared there was a small majority for the measure. Four messengers were appointed to know if Mr. Fall would accept the office; upon which he desired time to consider before he gave his reply. The next Lord's-day, when this answer was reported, and it was proposed that Mr. Fall should continue to preach till he had given his reply, one of the deacons said, "that he never should preach again in that pulpit;" and another said, "that as the people had chosen Mr. Fall, they might take him and keep him, but the place was theirs;" adding, that "he hoped the Lord would bless them."

The above, in reference to Mr. Fall, is extracted from the account of proceedings read afterwards, at the settlement of Mr. Fall over those who had chosen him to be the pastor of the church, by "Captain Thomas Best," who is styled "one of their worthy deacons." This was the origin of the church in Little Alie-street.

The Society of Ministers took part with the people who remained in Prescot-street, and refused to give any countenance to those who had separated themselves from the church. Their

reasons for this do not appear; but I conjecture, as there was nothing against the character of Mr. Fall, that they were of opinion he had not sufficient talents to support the character and respectability of the congregation at Prescot-street, and that he had acted wrong in accepting the invitation, when the majority was so small, and the minority opposed to him so powerful in their influence. It was doubtless a choice of difficulties; and as Dr. Gill was the pastor of Mr. Fall, it is not likely he would have taken so decided a part against him and his adherents, had he not been influenced by strong reasons. Instances of this kind are to be deeply lamented; but in some cases, the constitution of our churches and congregations prove, if not the cause, yet the painful occasion of them.

Mr. Samuel Burford, who was the pastor of the church at Lyme, was now invited to supply; and on "August 12, 1755, the ministers were informed by the deacons, Messrs. Manypenny, Morse, Laurance, and Fisher, that the church had agreed to choose Mr. Burford as their pastor, and were requested to assist at his ordination at the meeting in Goodman's-fields, on the fourth day of September ensuing. Mr. Edward Wallin preached on this occasion, and published the sermon.

Mr. Burford appears to have spent some time in study, with a view to the work of the ministry, and became a very reputable and useful pastor of the church. He was born at Lyme, and when about eighteen or nineteen years of age, he was baptized, and became a member of the church in that town; and having been called to the ministry, he was settled as their pastor about the year 1749. At the time of Mr. Wilson's death, and for several years afterwards, he was conducting business in Lyme, in connection with preaching to the church, who could not enable him to support his family without labouring with his hands. The general approbation expressed

towards him for the usefulness of his labours and his respectable talents, pointed him out to the people at Prescot-street.

Mr. Burford filled up the important station into which the providence of God had brought him with great reputation, comfort, and success. Being a man of strong natural parts, a lively imagination, a retentive memory, an agreeable voice, and a pleasing elocution, his ministry was well attended, and the church greatly increased. Though he accepted the office with great diffidence, yet, having accepted it, he applied himself to the duties of his office with assiduity and zeal. He possessed great humility of mind, and a sweetness and affability of temper which rendered him accessible to persons in the meanest station. He was distinguished for Christian candour and modesty, so that these dispositions evidently possessed his heart, governed his conduct, and put life into his public ministrations.

In his pulpit exercises, especially when engaged in public prayer, he discovered much spirituality of sentiment, fluency of language, and fervour of soul. His natural abilities, which were good, were improved by application, so that his popularity gradually increased. His knowledge of divine truth was considerable, and he explained the doctrines of grace in an experimental manner, whilst he urged the duties of religion by the most evangelical motives. With affection and faithfulness he addressed the hearts and consciences of saints and sinners; and a divine blessing attended his ministry, so that he was indeed a very acceptable and very useful minister of Jesus Christ. God highly honoured this faithful man, by giving him many seals to his ministry. He was not only acceptable when in the pulpit, but agreeable when out of it, manifesting sincere affection towards all the church, weeping with those that wept, and rejoicing with those that rejoiced. His usefulness in the building up of the church, by many additions being made to it, united with the general excellency of his character, and his

amiable disposition, procured for him in return, warm expressions of regard and love from the church towards him.

Sometime before his death, Mr. Burford undertook the afternoon service on the Saturday to the congregation of Sabbatarian Baptists, meeting at Curriers'-hall; but in the midst of all these useful labours, his work was very suddenly finished, and his course quickly ended. He had laboured at Prescot-street thirteen years only, and had preached on the Lord's day, April 10, 1768; but before another Sabbath had revolved, his eyes were closed in death, and this good and faithful servant entered into the joy of his Lord. Thus, in a few days, sickness and death pulled down a constitution which had the appearance of health and vigour; and so rapid and secret was the progress of the disease, that the foundation of the house was undermined and nearly destroyed, before the danger of its fall was well apprehended.

"During this short time he felt great pain, which he nevertheless bore with becoming patience and fortitude. It was his desire, for the sake of his family and his people, if it were the will of God, that he might still live: and with some degree of earnestness he prayed for a blessing on the means used to that end; adding, 'That God was yet able to raise him up.' But it was otherwise determined. On the day preceding his death, a veil was drawn over his mind; so that he had discouraging doubts and temptations to contend with, as well as the pains of his increasing disease. 'He feared,' he said, 'that God was dealing with him in wrath, and that he was an unprofitable servant;' adding, 'that he could not now see that God had made a covenant with him, as he formerly thought he had seen.' But on the following day, the day of his dissolution, the cloud dispersed; and there succeeded to it a happy composure and tranquillity of mind. 'He saw,' as he expressed it, 'that God had loved him with an everlasting love, and that he was now with loving-kindness drawing him to himself.'

And with pleasure he repeated those words of the Psalmist,—*This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him,* Ps. xxxiv. 6, 7, 8. Death now approached him; and perceiving his departure at hand, he said to those around him, 'My people are dear to me, and I believe they love me. My family, and wife, and all, I must leave in the hands of God. I am going to the arms of Jesus;'—and so he expired. Thus lived, and thus died, this amiable and worthy man, this sincere Christian and faithful servant of God."

His remains were interred in Bunhill-fields burial ground, and Mr. Clark, of Unicorn-yard, delivered an oration at his grave. The speaker designates the deceased as "an able, faithful, zealous, useful, and humble servant of Jesus;" and speaks of his distinguished talents for usefulness, and growing success of his youth, and vigour, and fervour, and zeal in his Master's service, when he was called away from a large and increasing community.

His funeral sermon was preached at Prescot-street, April 24, 1768, by Dr. Samuel Stennett. This sermon, which was published at the request of the church, and for the benefit of the family, was founded upon John xx. 16;—*Then said Thomas, Let us also go, that we may die with him.* In speaking of Mr. Burford, Dr. Stennett says, "*The memory of the just is blessed:* and there seems special occasion for taking some notice of the characters, tempers, and conduct of such, who, by reason of their stations in life, have been more generally known than others; and who, by the grace of God, have been enabled to discharge themselves worthily, in the important and painful work of the Christian ministry. It is a tribute we owe to their memory, and which we should be the rather inclined to pay, as

thereby somewhat may be contributed to our own comfort and edification."

After having mentioned many of the peculiar excellencies of the deceased, the Doctor adds, "Need I put you in mind, my friends, of the proofs he gave of his ardent concern, not for your temporal prosperity only, but most of all for your spiritual and everlasting welfare?—How faithfully he dispensed the word of truth among you, by the terrors of the Lord persuading the stupid thoughtless sinner, and by the mercy and grace of the gospel encouraging the sincere and humble inquirer?—How he instructed the ignorant, and warned the presumptuous?—How he *exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory?* Need I remind you, with what fluency, affection, and fervour, he usually poured out his prayers to God among you and for you? Or need I tell you, how he exemplified the doctrine he preached, so far as consists with human frailty, in the general course of his life, conducting the affairs of his family with prudence and frugality, attending diligently and regularly on the duties of his public ministry, and carrying himself, in all his familiar intercourses at your houses, with seriousness and cheerfulness? *Ye are his witnesses,* I think I may say, *how holily, and justly, and unblameably he behaved himself among you.*

"But he is now no more—no more as to this world. Mysterious providence! We are sure it is right, but we know not how to explain it. A great variety of circumstances would have led us to apprehend, that his continuance among us, which was the voice of nature, and the earnest wish of his friends, might also be the will of Providence. But *God's thoughts are not our thoughts, nor his ways our ways.* The divine purpose was not to be altered. Neither early life, nor

growing usefulness, nor the tears of a numerous family, nor the prayers of his Christian friends, such of them as apprehended his danger, nor the aid of skilful physicians, could prevail to get the sentence that was gone forth reversed, or even postponed. Death made his advances upon him suddenly, giving either us or him but little notice of his approach."

Mr. Burford left a widow and a large family of young and helpless children. It appears that the friends of Mr. Burford, persons of that church which he had so faithfully served, and so greatly increased, and some of other churches, came forward generously and compassionately, and entered into measures for their relief and support.

Mr. Burford had the pleasure, to his no small comfort, before his death, to introduce one of his sons to join the church in Prescot-street. One of his daughters, a member of that church, is still living.

The church is still large andflourishing. The Baptist Fund has derived very considerable assistance from it. It is now under the care of Mr. Thomas Griffin.

CHURCH AT LITTLE ALIE-STREET.

THE meeting-house which was built here by Mr. James Fall and his friends, is a good-sized building, capable of holding about five hundred persons, with a convenient vestry.

The circumstances which led to the formation of this church have been narrated in the last article. To have Mr. Fall as their pastor, was a privilege which they who had voted for him could not be deprived of; but they could scarcely expect that those who disapproved his ministry, especially when they happened to be the deacons and the trustees of the meeting-house, would agree to surrender up the place to them, who though a majority in point of numbers, were probably unable

to support the minister. It should be considered too, that the congregation usually adhere to the meeting-house, however the members of the church decide in the choice of a new minister: and in this case it is evident that they took the side of the trustees, who were also supported in their conduct by the church in Carter-lane, of which Mr. Fall was a member, and the Society of Ministers, to which he belonged. It is not probable this would have been the case, had it not been thought that Mr. Fall was an unsuitable person to fill the office of pastor, and to keep up the congregation. It appears, however, that the Prescot-street people treated the separatists with great severity. The latter say, "We sent messengers to treat with them for an amicable separation, that so we might acknowledge each other a church of Christ; withal desiring the blessing and presence of God might be with them, as we hoped it would be with us. To which they returned this answer, 'That if we would come and acknowledge we had rent ourselves from the church, and ask them for a dismission, they would not only grant us this, but own us as a sister church; but otherwise should deem us a disorderly set of people.' This acknowledgment we could not make consistently with the principles of independency which we profess, and hope ever to maintain. We were willing to seek for peace, and pursue it; but we could not sacrifice truth, nor renounce our dependency upon Christ, to obtain it." *

Admitting the correctness of the statement, that a majority of the members chose Mr. Fall, it was certainly manifesting a total disregard to the principles of our churches, for the minority to demand from them an acknowledgment at variance with those principles, and to consider those as a "disorderly people," who, if they would have submitted to the degradation

* The account of the church in Little Alie-street, p. 27, an Appendix to the Ordination Discourses, by James Fall, of Watford, 1754.

proposed, might have been recognised by the same persons as "a sister church." The writer feels persuaded that the apostle James would have included such a circumstance in his cutting censure,—*My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

Mr. James Fall was ordained over those who had formed themselves into a new church, on March 28, 1754, in the Independent meeting-house in Crispin-street, Spital-fields. His worthy father, Mr. James Fall, pastor of the church at Watford, conducted the service. This he afterwards published. It contains "the Preamble to the Work of the Day;" a Charge founded upon Zech. xi. 4.—*Thus saith the Lord, my God; feed the flock of the slaughter:* and the account of the proceedings of the church, which was read by "one of their deacons, that worthy, pious gentleman, Captain Thomas Best." Mr. Fall says, "I doubt not but I shall be blamed by some for being concerned in this work; but I am firmly persuaded I have espoused a righteous cause, and which will be owned by a righteous God, who will, I cannot but believe, highly honour them with his presence and blessing. Nor am I yet convinced that my son, or the church he is now the pastor of, have acted contrary to the rule of Christ's word, or the order of his house."

Mr. Amos Harrison, of Croydon, united with Mr. Fall in the ordination of the pastor and deacons, Messrs. Best, Morgan, and Woodfield.—"The new meeting-house in Little Alie-street was opened June 26, 1754. The Rev. James Fall, of Watford, engaged in prayer, and the Rev. James Fall, jun. prayed, and preached a sermon suitable for the occasion."

Mr. Fall's life was short and tumultuous. He died Oct. 1756. Mr. Potts preached his funeral sermon, and was requested to publish it, which he engaged to comply with. He was succeeded by Mr. William Dowars, whose preaching reduced the congregation almost to nothing. It is now a large and flourishing church under the care of Mr. William Shenstone.

CHURCH IN LITTLE WILD-STREET.

THE meeting-house first occupied by the church here was originally a Roman Catholic chapel, built not long before the Revolution in 1688, but had been unoccupied from the time James II. abdicated his crown, and, as the French minister said, "sold his three kingdoms for a mitre!"

This chapel was erected probably by the Spanish ambassador, who occupied part of a large mansion called "Weld House," from its having been the property of Humphrey Weld, Esq. of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire. This ambassador was Don Pedro Ronquillo, who had built this "Cause Room," or chapel, in his garden. When King James II. left the kingdom, the principal papists about the court, having conveyed all their valuable effects to this place, thinking, perhaps, they would there be preserved in safety, Don Pedro was very ill treated by the populace, who, incensed againt popery, stripped his house of the furniture, library, plate, &c. The ambassador afterwards received from the government seventeen hundred pounds for this loss. In 1695 Weld House was pulled down, and fourteen brick houses erected on its site.*

This chapel was an oblong building, with three galleries, capable of containing about five hundred people: the pulpit stood against the west wall. It was pulled down about thirty years since, and the present place, which is a large, elegant, circular building, was erected in its stead: it was enlarged, in 1817, by the addition of an end gallery. The former gallery, of only two seats deep, went round about three parts of the building. It will now contain about six hundred persons.

* History of the Revolutions in England under the Stuart Family, by F. J. D'Orleans.—Rapin's History of England.—Buckingham's Account of the Revolution.

The church in this place was founded by that eminent minister, Mr JOHN PIGGOTT. He was originally a member of the church in Rupert-street, Goodman's-fields, at which time he was employed in keeping a school for his support.

This was one of the five churches founded upon the six principles in Heb. vi. 2, which on the 15th of Nov. 1691, agreed to found another church in John's-court, Hart-street, Covent-garden. Mr. Piggott left Rupert-street to settle in John's-court, in 1691, and in that year I find the church in Petty France agreeing to dismiss a young woman named Taylor to brother Piggott's.

Mr. Piggott's intimacy with Mr. Joseph Stennett, and with that extraordinary scholar Mr. William Collins, accounts for the extent of his own learning, and his eminent qualifications as a minister of Christ.

In the funeral sermon preached by Mr. Piggott, Nov. 15, 1702, for Mr. William Collins, he gives the following statement respecting himself, and the advantages he had derived from the instructions of that valuable and learned man.—"His lips," says Mr. Piggott, "did dispense knowledge. He was very communicative, and ready to instruct those he conversed with. And I must ever own, to the honour of his memory, that he acted towards me, not only like a friend, but a father, both in directing and encouraging me in my studies. He has often cleared up that to my understanding which before was perplexed and obscure. He has prayed with me, and comforted me; but he is absent: oh, how do I miss my guide and my friend!—What is the Lord a doing! What removes has he made! How can we forbear to cry out, *O the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!*"

The churches who maintained the "six foundation principles in Heb. vi. 2," had many among them who were strict and rigid Arminians, and who therefore could not bear it when any of their ministers preached the doctrine of particular redemption.

This was the case respecting Mr. Piggott. After he had for more than seven years been pastor of the church in Hart-street, Covent-garden, in 1699, a difference of opinion existed between the pastor and some of the people, respecting "personal election and final perseverance;" and this led to some fierce debates. Mr. Piggott was requested by the church to be as "inoffensive in his preaching as he could on those points of controversy, and that he would desire those ministers that preached for him to be as inoffensive as they could," &c. To this request we have the pastor's written reply:—

"I promise to preach (as God shall assist me) as inoffensively as I can with a good conscience, in relation to personal election, particular redemption, and final perseverance. Witness my hand,

JOHN PIGGOTT."

The ministry of Mr. Piggott being purely Calvinistic, the disputes at length arose so high, that a majority of the church resolved to look out for another meeting-house. During these debates, I find that on May 8, 1700, those excellent ministers, Messrs. William Collins, Richard Adams, and Joseph Stennett, were present, to advise and assist them. But all was vain: they found *the beginning of strife was like the letting out of water!* This example should operate as a warning against every attempt to preserve church fellowship among those Christians who differ in opinion on such important doctrines as "personal election, particular redemption, and final perseverance." If those who compose a church be not perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment upon such subjects as these, it is not possible they can or will *endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

Mr. Piggott and his people having now removed to Little Wild [Weld] Street, they agreed, at a monthly church meeting, Jan. 15, 1700-1, "to set apart a day of solemn fasting and

prayer, for the blessing of God upon the ministry of the church, and that God would add daily to their number such as shall be saved." This meeting, according to the good custom of those better days (in this respect) in our churches, was to commence at nine o'clock in the morning: the services of prayer, and an address from the pastor, were generally continued till about three o'clock in the afternoon. It is affecting that services so suitable for humbling ourselves before God, and acknowledging our dependence upon him for the supplies of his Spirit, should have been suffered to drop into disuse! The reduced situation of many of our churches is probably the direct effect of this spirit of lukewarmness; and the circumstances of most of them, where but little comparatively of the power of primitive godliness is felt, prove the necessity of restoring so Christian and commendable a practice.

That truly great man, Mr. John Piggott, continued his ministry with great reputation and success until prevented by illness. The last church meeting he attended was in July, 1712, and in March, 1713, he was called to his rest and his reward. For further particulars concerning him, and for the letter he sent to his afflicted church, just before his death, see vol. ii. p. 451.

After Mr. Piggott's death, a disturbance arose in the church on account of a Mr. Thomas Ely. He was invited by the church, Sept. 30, 1713, to supply them for a month; and the invitation was repeated, until a report was brought of some inconsistencies in his conduct: one was, that he had "stood godfather by proxy to Mr. Brown's child;" which, in a Baptist minister, was certainly most ludicrous and inconsistent. Mr. Ely being rejected by the church, removed to Glass-house-street, Swallow-street.

In Sept. 1714, Mr. Caleb Jope, who had been a minister of Broadmead church, Bristol, and an assistant in the academy, was invited to preach here; and on Oct. 24, 1714, he was elected pastor of the church: this, however, was much dis-

approved by some leading members in the minority, and it is probable Mr. Jope was advised not to accept the invitation.*

The next pastor of the church was Mr. Thomas Harrison. This young minister was a son of Mr. Thomas Harrison, of Lorimers'-hall, and a member of the church under the care of Mr. Joseph Maisters, at Joiners'-hall; by which church, it should seem, he had been called to the ministry. He was first invited to preach at Little Wild-street, April 14, 1714; but on Mr. Jope, from Bristol, coming among them, he was desired to decline his services. After Mr. Jope had refused to accept the pastoral office, Mr. Harrison was called to it, and complied with the invitation, March 23, 1714-15.

It should seem that many of the members objected to this choice, as I find that the deacons of the church were desired "to confer with Mr. Harrison about accommodating those friends who are uneasy; and that if it be suitable to him, to have him ordained on Easter Monday; and that the time be delayed no longer, if God permit."

Soon after this settlement, many of the former members, who had left the church with Mr. Thomas Ely, returned, and, on their profession of sorrow for their improper and disorderly conduct, were again received into the communion of the church.

Mr. Harrison appears to have fulfilled the duties of his station for about fourteen years, to the satisfaction of the church. But in January, 1729, we find him complaining that the state of his health would not admit of his preaching twice a day, and desiring to be relieved from preaching in the morning of the Lord's day. The church accordingly agreed to provide him assistance without reducing his salary on that account. But they had soon reason to suspect that this was part of a plan of

* Mr Jope sunk into great obscurity, if not into circumstances of disgrace, at the latter part of his life. Some further account will be given of him in the next volume, under the article, "Church at Ringwood."

their unworthy pastor to conform to the Church of England, and that he spent his mornings of a Lord's day in attending the worship of the Establishment. There was a report soon in circulation, that "Mr. Harrison was going to Tunbridge, and would come up to London in canonical robes." While Mr. Harrison was at this fashionable watering-place, with the family of Mr. Lewis Way, of Greenwich,* a correspondence took place between the deacons of the church and their pastor on the subject, which is preserved, and which, as also his replies to some interrogations from the members, presents an affecting instance of versatility, if not of cunning and duplicity. In "Fogg's Journal" of the 10th of July, was this paragraph:—"We hear that a very pious congregation in Little Wild-street, called by the name of Anabaptists, are in a deep concern for the loss of their pastor, who has lately eloped from them, and has very wickedly gone over to the Church of England!" This

* Mr. Lewis Way appears to have been a subscriber to the congregation in Wild-street; as the church, in their letter to Mr. Harrison in 1729, call him "their generous benefactor." At a church meeting, Dec. 10, 1732, I find these resolutions, in which it appears that Mr. Way was still connected with them:—"Agreed, that it is the desire of this church to have the Test and Corporation Acts removed:"—"that proper application be made to parliament, if it shall appear to be a proper season:"—"A report being made that Mr. Way is willing to represent the congregation that usually meets in this place,—agreed, that he, as a subscriber, be appointed," &c.

Mr. Way appears to have been exceedingly friendly to Mr. Harrison, and I should conclude, that though that gentleman had not wholly separated himself from the Dissenters, he was strongly inclined to the Church of England. My reason for this is, when it was mentioned that Mr. Harrison was going to Tunbridge Wells "with the good family at Greenwich," it was replied by one of the members of Wild-street, "I wish they don't turn him quite over." Mr. Harrison, however, declared afterwards, that Mr. Way's family knew nothing of his intentions.

sarcasm reminds us of the good English proverb, "Many a true word spoken in jest!" It certainly looks as if wickedness was the cause, when we find, that after all Mr. Harrison's statements, that "he had been long searching for truth," and telling the church that "their dissensions at first led him to think of becoming a conformist;" that he yet says, in a letter of July 19,

"I shall, if I have life and health, be with you, as I proposed, the first Lord's day of August, when I hope to meet you with cordial affection on your part, as I have done nothing to forfeit it, answerable to that love on mine; which, had I thought it needful to leave you, would have rendered the separation not a little painful. That we may, amidst all the changes of life, glorify God with alacrity, and have the sweet prelibations of glory till we shall enter into it, will be the earnest prayer, and constant endeavour, of your affectionate pastor,

THOMAS HARRISON."

In the reply of the church to this effusion, dated July 27, they thank this gentleman, "that amidst his searches and inquiries, he still acknowledged them to be *a church of Christ*." They indignantly repel the charge of dissensions which he had insinuated against them; and conclude by saying,

"We are not conscious to ourselves, as a church, that we have given you just cause to withdraw your affections from us, and to turn your thoughts towards conformity. We have lately, at your first request, (without lessening your income,) indulged you with a morning assistant, out of a tender regard to your bodily infirmities, being then unacquainted with your secret intentions. We cannot but think that your returns are not suitable to our affections; but on the contrary, you have shewn to us your dislike by attending at the established church. The posture of our affairs calls upon us to come to some resolution; accordingly, we have this day staid the church, and have resolved to adjourn our communion till the first Lord's day in September;

also have appointed a church meeting on Thursday next, at three o'clock in the afternoon: we persuade ourselves you will take that opportunity to set matters in a clear light. We continue to pray for you, that you may with us be kept from every prevarication and temptation, that you may make manifest your 'prelibations of glory,' by a humble and meek discharge of the solemn obligations becoming your character!"

Signed by forty-four names of the men-members of the church.

At the meeting proposed on the 31st, Mr. Harrison attended, and being required to give the church satisfaction as to his principles; he made the following written declaration:—

"Forasmuch as I have been asked my sentiments, according as I determined to do, I do declare that I have thought fit to alter my sentiments, in divers things, and particularly with regard to baptism; and that I have no scruple about the lawfulness of conformity: and since a separation is now become necessary, I desire we may part in the most friendly manner.

July 31, 1729. THOMAS HARRISON."

The church met the next Lord's-day, and accepted his resignation of the pastoral office, and directed that all arrears of subscriptions due to Mr. Harrison should be made up and paid over to him.

Mr. Harrison soon after obtained ordination in the Church of England, and published a sermon which he had preached at the parish church of St. Leonard's, Foster-lane, September 14, 1729. This was founded upon Philip. i. 20, *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed.* In the preface to this he proposes "to give his reasons for conformity;" but the most he attempts to accomplish is to show why he might, as he thought, innocently conform to the established church; not attempting to prove that he considered he ought to do so. In this discourse, too, he uses the hackney arguments for infant-baptism, and infers, from

that practice not being forbidden in scripture, that it was lawful to be observed; and concludes by inferring, "That the sign of the cross, forms of prayer, sureties in baptism, and ceremonies, may be innocently complied with;" and "That the [established] church imposing her laws, is no more than what every society practises, that the majority concludes the minority."

His attempts at reasoning were speedily, and ludicrously exposed, by the famous Orator Henley, in a theological lecture delivered at the Oratory in Lincoln's Inn Fields,* on Sunday evening, October 5, 1729. This lecture was published with the title of "A Child's Guide for the Rev. Mr. Thomas Harrison; or a Demonstration of the Falseness of his Principles, Reasonings, and Criticisms;—defending the Church against his reasons for Conformity; showing his numerous Contradictions and Errors as to Independency, a National or Political Church, the Infancy of the Primitive Church, the Model of Church Government, the Point of Baptism; &c. Proving his Arguments are directly the same with the arguments of the Church of Rome." The orator, after having fully exposed his shallow arguments, and turned them all against himself, thus concludes, "He exhorts at last, 'Brethren be as I am;' that is, do not understand the scriptures, lay down false propositions, argue falsely from them, be as superficial as possible; begin with a text *That you shall not be ashamed,* and end with a prayer for better wisdom!"

From the events mentioned in our account of Pinners'-hall church, in relation to the funeral of the Lady Dowager Dame Page, the reader might have been prepared to expect that such vanity and foppery would at length expose this pedant to the contempt of the profane and the pity of the pious. In the Essay published by Dr. Gill on that occasion, he thus describes this gentleman: "Mr. Harrison tells them," [Mr. Lewis Way, and his wife, to whom his sermon was dedicated,] 'A very small

* This place is mentioned as the "Oratory Meeting, Lincoln's Inn Fields," in Maitland's History of London, in 1739.

time was allotted him for finishing his discourse;' time enough, unless it had been better performed. He goes on with compliments upon Sir and Madam, and concludes with praying for them, that they might long 'enjoy together the blessings of an indulgent providence,' that they might be 'eminently useful, and extensively happy;' which, by the help of transposition, would make a beautiful sentence; and that at last they 'might receive a distinguishing crown;' but whether he meant one different from that in the text, I cannot say. I subjoin to this, that I apprehend it would not have been amiss, if he had had the ingenuity to have acknowledged, that the character which he gave in the sermon of the deceased Lady, was drawn up by the gentleman to whom the dedication is made; whereas, he has published it to the world as his own, without giving the least hint of it."*

I have not learned what became of Mr. Harrison after he was rejected as the pastor of the church; but there is no doubt that he who had appeared as a meteor, attracting attention for a short time, on finding himself in the regions of space, soon sunk into insignificance and obscurity. The church now directed their attention towards Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Andrew Gifford. He appears to have preached during the month of October, 1729; and on November 6, a deputation of the church waited upon him, to desire him to preach for them another month: this however he declined. On November 30, they resolved "to desire Dr. Kinch,† and Mr. Rees, (of Limehouse,) to preach to us for one year, or longer, in the morning, at their respective turns."

At the church-meeting, Dec. 14, 1729, it was agreed, "That our brother Mr. Andrew Gifford, be called to the pastoral care of this church, and that the following letter be sent to him accordingly:"

* Dr. Gill's Sermons and Tracts, vol. iii. p. 624.

† A member of Paul's-alley church.

"*The Church of Christ in Little Wild-street, London, to our well-beloved and worthy brother Andrew Gifford, minister of the gospel, at Bristol: grace, mercy, and truth, be multiplied through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

"Dear Sir,

"The 14th of this instant, December, (being our sacrament-day,) was fixed on by the church for the choice of a pastor: the church proceeded accordingly, and chose you. Judging you to be in a good measure by the Lord fitted and prepared for that great, awful, and glorious work, to take the care of immortal souls, &c. And, Sir, the church, as such, doth in the most solemn, general, and hearty manner, call upon you, and for you, to take upon you the pastoral care of her. We are satisfied many prayers have been sent up to heaven on this account. We hope, nay, we would not doubt, but by your complying with the church's call, that it will issue in the glory of God, and the mutual happiness of you and the people. True it is, the work is great, but we hope you see your call to be full and clear in all respects; and be encouraged, it is the Lord's work, and he will own and defend it, and bless it to the end of the world; as Matthew xxviii. latter end; and our blessed and dear Lord, had and hath such love for precious immortal souls that he washeth them from their sins, in his own precious blood, &c. And therefore be not discouraged, but, on the contrary, come forth in the name, fear, and strength of the Captain of Salvation.

"Dear Sir, your answer to these, and presence here, will be hoped for and expected as soon as possible, because it is our desire to come to a settlement with all convenient speed. We heartily wish you a good journey, and pray that you may be brought to us in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ; and subscribe ourselves your brethren in the Lord."

Signed by thirty-five men.

The records add,—"In answer to the said letter, brother Andrew Gifford sent the following:—

"*To the Church of Christ meeting in Little Wild-street, London, grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

"Honoured and beloved in our Lord Jesus,

"It is not improbable you expected an answer to yours of the 14th instant before now. But when you shall be acquainted with the several steps necessary to be taken, in order to its being done in a regular manner, I doubt not you will be far from thinking it an unreasonable delay.

"When I consider my incapacity for so great a trust which you commit to my care; its importance to precious souls, especially yours and my own; how much the Redeemer's honour and interest in this world is concerned in it; and, above all, the awful account that must be given of it in another; my weakness and fears discourage me from the attempt. But upon the other hand, when I reflect upon the obligations I am under, both moral and Christian, to do my utmost for the glory of God in the world, the conduct of his providence in this important affair, together with the righteousness and all-sufficiency of the Redeemer, and his faithful promise never to leave those who rely on him; I cannot but think it my duty to comply with your earnest and importunate request. And therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus, the great head of the church and bishop of souls, (with humble dependance upon him for abilities to discharge it,) I hereby signify my acceptance of your call to the pastoral office and care. Among other motives that induce me to it, I cannot omit mentioning your unanimity that appears in it; that fervent faith, love, and zeal; that order and harmony which I beheld when amongst you, and which is spoken of to your praise in the churches of Christ.

"Gratitude, as well as interest, obliges me to concur in your kind and pious wishes for my appearance in the fulness of the

blessing of the gospel, and our mutual prosperity. May the great Shepherd also own and bless you with his presence, fill you with the Spirit, enable you to abound in love and good works, and at last crown you with immortal glory! Oh that by the ministry and ordinances of his house below, you may be prepared for a happy translation into the heavenly paradise.

"If God please, I propose to wait on you with all convenient speed, and in the mean time shall not cease to commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified; which is the only way, at present, that I can shew how much I am, dear brethren and sisters, your faithful friend and affectionate servant for Jesus' sake,

Bristol, Dec. 27, 1729. A. GIFFORD."

Mr. Gifford had been, for some time before this period, engaged as an assistant minister to Mr. George Eaton, at Nottingham, and was a member of that church. For two years he had been an assistant minister to Mr. Bernard Foskett, of Bristol. The church at Nottingham sent the following recommendatory letter to the church in Little Wild-street:—

"*The Church of Christ under the pastoral care of our well-beloved brother, Mr. George Eaton, meeting in Nottingham, to the Church of Christ meeting in Little Wild-street, London, lately under the pastoral care of that eminent servant of Christ, Mr. John Piggott, sendeth Christian salutation.*

"Whereas our dear and well-beloved brother, Mr. Andrew Gifford, who for some time was a member with us, and a faithful fellow-helper in the work of the ministry among us, but through the divine Providence, that settles the bounds of our habitations, is now removed to you: We by these heartily recommend him to you, and sincerely pray that he may come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel, and that he and you

may have mutual comfort, and an increase of all the graces and fruits of God's Holy Spirit, shall be the constant prayers of your unworthy brethren in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.

These in behalf of the rest,	JOHN ROPER,	GEO. EATON, pastor,
	JOS. POLLARD,	JOS. EATON,
	WILLIAM LEIGH,	THOMAS BULL,
	BENJAMIN BULL,	JOHN JERMAN.""

Jan. 25, 1729-30.

On Thursday, the 5th of Feb. 1729, Mr. Gifford was "unanimously called to, accepted of, and was invested in the pastoral office with the greatest solemnity." It is not said who the ministers were that assisted at this ordination; but there is no doubt that the principal of the London ministers were engaged on the occasion. The deacons of the church at this time were, William Perkins, Daniel Perkins, John Turner, Samuel Nicholls, sen. Samuel Burch, sen. John Clater, and Allen Evans.

About three years after Mr. Gifford's ordination, he lost his first wife, Martha Gifford. The following respectful notice of this event appears among the records of the church in Little Wild-street:—"She exchanged her place in the church below, for a much more glorious and happy one in the church triumphant above, Friday, Dec. 29, 1732. Without flattery, it may be said of her, she enjoyed plenty without pride, was easy without indolence, firm without obstinacy, and pious without ostentation. She was buried Jan. 5, at Chesham, according to her request, amongst the Baptists in the lower meeting-house,* and not in the chancel of the place of public worship, according to the establishment which belonged to the family. A funeral sermon was preached Jan. 14 following, at Wild-street,

* A plain stone, containing the above description of Mrs. Gifford, is in the Rev. Mr. Tomlin's meeting-house, at Chesham.

on Gen. iii. 15, by brother Gill, and printed." This sermon is No. xxiii. in Dr. Gill's "Sermons and Tracts." When first published, it was inscribed by the author "To John Ware, Esq. one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Bucks, and the rest of the relations of the deceased." The character given of this pious and excellent female in the sermon, is a full corroboration of the above description of her eminent Christian character.

At the beginning of the year 1733, the church were seriously thinking of removing their place of meeting, on account of some difficulties that occurred respecting the renewal of their lease. At a church meeting, Jan. 16, 1731, it was stated that "a convenient spot of ground is to be sold, upon which may be built a place to worship God in." A committee was appointed of the pastor, deacons, and others, to attend to the business. This was soon after relinquished, and a new lease was obtained in February, 1735.

About this time Mr. John Payne, an opulent member of the church, presented the pastor and deacons with twelve silver cups, for the use of the church at the Lord's table: these were accepted with expressions of "sincere and hearty thanks," and a promise "to apply them, to the utmost of their power, to the purposes for which they were given."

Notwithstanding the union and good understanding which at this period prevailed among the pastor and deacons, and the members of the church; and notwithstanding their earnest and hearty prayer, that "no difference or division may ever happen;" it was not more than six months before "the accuser of the brethren" contrived to kindle such a flame of angry contention among them, that it led soon after to a division in the church; and the painful effects of which continued to disturb the peace and prosperity of the London churches for more than half a century! *Behold, how great a fire a little matter kindleth.*

The scene of angry contention which took place in the

church on this occasion, furnished a practical comment upon Solomon's remark,—*A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.* Without descending to minute particulars, which would be uninteresting to general readers, suffice it to say, that the opinion of by far the greater part of the members was, that the charge exhibited against Mr. Gifford, for the purpose of removing him from the pastoral office, should not be received; that after the females who were present, and who were nearly as numerous as the men, and *all* of whom were for the pastor's continuance, had been prevented from voting, the measure was carried against the pastor by a majority of two voices only. The Society of Ministers, to whom Mr. Gifford belonged, appear to have acted with more precipitation than consisted with decorum, in excluding him from their Society; they also agreed to preach for the minority at Little Wild-street, who had kept possession of the meeting-house, and refused to comply with a respectful application to preach at the opening of the new meeting-house in Eagle-street. Thus a breach was made, which for many years was not closed, and Mr. Gifford had the mortification of losing the friendship and intimacy of many whom he highly esteemed.

Of Mr. Gifford, and those who adhered to him as their pastor, we shall have again to speak under the article of the church in Eagle-street.

The church in Little Wild-street remained for some time destitute of a pastor, when they directed their attention towards Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Joseph Stennett, then pastor of the church at Exeter. At a church meeting, March 31, 1736, after deciding "that the sisters had a right to vote in the choice of a minister," it was agreed to invite Mr. Stennett to the pastoral office, "provided the Almighty should make his way clear." On March 30, 1736-37, the committee reported to the church the steps they had taken in respect to Mr. Stennett and the church at Exeter, and that the issue was, that he had accepted their call. Upon this they appointed a meeting," t^{o}

be spent in praise and thanksgiving to God, for his so seasonably appearing for us in the time of our distresses, and granting us a prospect of so happy a settlement."

Joseph Stennett, D. D. was born in London, Nov. 6, 1692. He received his instructions in grammar and classical learning from two of the ablest scholars of that day, Mr. Ainsworth, author of the Latin Dictionary, and Dr. Ward, Professor of Rhetoric in Gresham College. Having devoted his attention to the work of the ministry, at an early age his learned and pious father cultivated his mind with the other branches of literature. When that eminent minister was on his death-bed, he gave this son, who was then in the twenty-first year of his age, very particular directions with respect to the management of his studies, and how to conduct himself as a minister in his future life.

He was about fifteen when he first made a public profession of religion by being baptized; and at the age of twenty-two he commenced his public ministry at Abergavenny, in Monmouthshire; but it appears he became a member of the church at Leominster, then under the care of Mr. Holder, to whom he was an assistant. Here he continued four or five years, during which time he received two very pressing invitations from different congregations in London, which he declined accepting. About the year 1719, he removed from Leominster to Exeter, and became pastor of the Baptist church in that city. Just at this time the dispute commenced between Messrs. Pierce and Hallet, and their Presbyterian congregations, respecting the doctrine of the Trinity. Mr. Stennett, though young, exerted himself with uncommon zeal, making a noble stand for the proper divinity of the Lord Jesus, and appearing with great lustre and brightness in defending those fundamental truths of the gospel. While here, I find his name signed to the Association letters of the western churches in the years 1722, 1725, 1726.

After spending about sixteen years at Exeter, he removed to

London, and was ordained over the church in Wild-street, Sept. 15, 1737. Dr. Gill and Mr. Samuel Wilson preached upon this occasion, and all the associated London ministers attended. He was now about forty-five years of age. Some instances of the evangelical zeal and patriotic ardour of Mr. Stennett, in the years 1738 and 1745, have been given in the history of those periods.

Mr. Stennett kept up a correspondence with his old friends at Exeter. I find a letter of his written to the Rev. Mr. John Waldrond, in Exeter, March 22, 1750; which, because of its alluding to public events, I copy. In this he says,

"We have great reason to mourn as well as you, for the declension we see about us. Taylor's Scripture Doctrine of Atonement, as he calls it, is a recent evidence to what lengths men are running. Though, to say the truth, I think it is almost as weak a book as it is corrupt. Bishop Leighton's Paraphrases have, I believe, pleased all good men among us. The Bishop of London, [Gibson,] not long since told me, that though he wished a regulation of the public ecclesiastical constitution, and that many things greatly wanted mending, yet the method proposed would not do; and the event shows it: for the matter seems to be buried already, and I believe it is best of all it is so; for I am well persuaded many of the persons concerned, aimed chiefly at expunging the principal doctrines of Christianity out of the ritual, and sinking them if possible in their new version of the Bible. I told his Lordship, indeed, that I more than ever saw the usefulness of the Book of Common Prayer; for considering how little the Scriptures are read by the common people, and how little the Gospel is preached by the clergy, if it were not for what is said of Christ in the Prayer Book, multitudes would forget there was any such person. He heartily joined in my observation, and told me he lately heard a sermon by an eminent preacher, who seemed to labour to keep the name of Christ out of it. 'For my part,' added he, 'my time is now

short, and therefore my charge to all my clergy is short too. I say to all of them that come to me, see to it that you preach Jesus Christ,—don't preach Seneca, nor Plato, but preach Jesus Christ.'

"I have done what I could in the affair of Breslau. The very worthy and reverend Mr. Christian Lewis Ficene, their messenger and agent, dined with me twice, and I had great pleasure in his conversation. The bishops plainly rejected their case, as they were Presbyterians.

"I have spent three afternoons in the gallery of the House of Commons within this fortnight, to hear the debates respecting the abuse of spirituous liquors; when such things were said, respecting the necessity of some vigorous steps, in order to reform the horrible public wickedness that grows at such a rate among us, and those things were said by some of the greatest men in the House, and in the administration, as well as others, that I am not without hopes, something will be done in earnest.

"You will hear before this comes to your hand, of the awful stroke of providence upon us, in the death of the Prince of Wales, who died on Wednesday night, of the pleuretic fever, after we had hoped all the danger was over. It has affected his Majesty much, and spread an awful apprehension among all thinking men. What the consequence will be, the great governor of the world only knows. 'Tis our mercy that he reigns, that we may trust in him, and may pray to him. Oh that we had but hearts to do so as we should, and all would be well!

"I am much obliged to you for the friendly notice you take of the friendly providence that has directed the alteration of my condition. I have a great reason to desire a share in your prayers, that I might be kept thankful and humble, and may be rendered more useful. When I have begged that my delay of writing may not hinder the continuance of a correspondence so

happily received; my paper obliges me to say, *Manum de tabula*, also, and assure you that I am

Your most obedient and affectionate humble servant,

"JOSEPH STENNETT.

"P. S. I am glad to hear Mr. Jones goes on well. My service attends him, and Mr. Lavington. I saw Sir William Younge at the House of Commons, on Wednesday last, and have not found him in better health for a long time."*

The University of St. Andrews, at Edinburgh, in the year 1754, created him Doctor in Divinity, at the instance and recommendation of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, their Chancellor, who condescended to send the diploma to Mr. Stennett by his Secretary.

A few years after this he was laid aside by afflictions from his beloved employment. When at Bath, about two months before his death, he dictated the following affectionate letter, to his son Samuel.

"*To the Church of Christ meeting in Little Wild-street.*

"My very dear and Christian Friends and Brethren,

"You cannot easily imagine how much pain it has given me to think that, after so much time has elapsed since I received your most Christian and tender letter, I should not be able to get a few moments of ease and strength enough to myself to write a few lines to you; nor indeed such a composure of mind as to dictate properly to my son, who, in the midst of all his filial tenderness for me, and the same bowels of affection for you as I have myself, has met with so sensible a stroke in his own family.† It is now near three months since I laid down

* Dr. Rippon's Baptist Register, vol. iii. p. 250.

† The death of his only child.

upon this, which I still call my dying bed; and which, notwithstanding the changes I have passed through, I still apprehend will be so. It is a deep scheme of providence indeed; my pains are so excruciating, and with very imperfect intermissions either by night or by day! Oh what a heart have I! How obdurate to render it necessary for instruction to be sealed by such a severe discipline as this! And yet if God had been pleased to let out that wrath upon my poor soul which my sins have righteously deserved, how much more deplorable would my case have been! But, through unbounded goodness, I have been able to sing of mercy as well as judgment. The Refiner has sat by all the time I have been in the furnace; and I have not been without saving instruction, effectually impressed, and divine supports afforded. Sometimes I think I could rejoice to talk to you once more of the loving-kindness of the Lord, and of what he has done for my soul, and to recommend that dear Jesus, with all the blessings of his salvation to your precious souls, which I have often sincerely, though poorly done in the course of my ministry. This has been a searching time with me, and I know I love you dearly. And it pleases me to think how this awakening affliction roused your sympathy, and I really believe increased your affection to me; and that you have been led to give such an instructive example on this occasion of faith and prayer to other churches. Go on, dear brethren, and be not weary of praying, waiting, and believing. In due time I shall receive the benefit of your faith and prayer, as I trust your own souls and your families will also.

"My dear brethren, let your love abound one towards another, forbearing one another, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Exercise your charity to all men in the manner in which the gospel recommends it. It is my great comfort in the views of eternity that I have been led, in these changeable and sad times, steadily and constantly to

maintain those doctrines, which I find are able to support me at such a season as this. I call my dear charge at Exeter, where I spent the first part of my ministry, the Lord knows in great weakness, to testify this concerning me. I always thought the great design of the gospel was to lay the creature in the dust, and to exalt the great Redeemer of the church. I always taught both them and you to love Jesus Christ, to live upon him, and to expect your justification from him alone, his blood, his righteousness imputed, and his intercession.

"But my pains and weakness oblige me to bring these broken thoughts to a close. Hold fast the form of sound words which you have received of me in faith and love. And there is one thing I desire may be particularly remembered, that, notwithstanding all the difficulties which attend a due apprehension of the connection between the grace of God, and the work of the Spirit, on the one hand, and the obligations of duty we are under in order to our salvation, on the other; if the gospel be true, it is as much our duty to repent and believe, and be holy, as it is Christ's promise to save us by the operations of his Spirit. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

"Brethren, as you would have your souls prosper, labour to maintain holy discipline in the church. Attend early and constantly on the public worship of God: cultivate the duties of religion in your families and your closets: see that the generous spirit, that has long prevailed among you, for the support and encouragement of the interest of our Lord Jesus Christ, may not decay: be exemplary in your conversation: and use your kind endeavours to restore such as are departed from the truth, or by an unholy walk have brought themselves under the censure of the church.

"Finally, my dear brethren, farewell. If we meet together again in this life, as it will be an amazing appearance of divine

power and goodness, so I trust it will be to answer some very valuable end. But, if it is otherwise ordered, God grant we may all have a glorious meeting in the better state, and not one be missing there! These are the constant prayers of your most faithful and affectionate brother and servant in our common Lord,

Bath, Nov. 30, 1757. JOSEPH STENNETT."

The disorder which issued in his death was a mortification in his foot, under which he laboured nearly six months. During this time, though the appearance of his foot was very terrible to those about him, he did not appear surprised or startled himself: even when he was told, at his first attack, that the disease might carry him off in a few days, he received the communication with amazing firmness and composure. Indeed, through the whole of his affliction, he manifested such Christian heroism, that some, who knew not the inward power of religion in supporting the mind, were constrained to acknowledge its divine influence. His patience in bearing the most excruciating tortures was very extraordinary; not a murmuring or repining word ever escaped his lips; and during intervals from pain, his enjoyments were considered by those about him to be superior to any he had ever experienced before. His serenity and cheerfulness continued with scarcely any interruption. He had not those raptures which some have experienced upon their dying beds, yet his faith and hope continued unshaken to the end of life.

Dr. Stennett finished his course Feb. 7, 1758, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. His funeral sermon was preached by Dr. Gill, at Little Wild-street, from Phil. i. 21.—*For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

In describing his character, the Doctor says, "His fine natural parts, acquired knowledge, and, above all, the grace of God, and the eminent gifts of it bestowed upon him, fitting

him for public service, all contributed to form his character, in whom the scholar, the Christian, and the divine, were so happily united. His ministerial abilities and qualifications are well known. His mien and deportment in the pulpit were graceful; his voice low, but soft and pleasant; and his language accurate and correct. He had a large compass of thought, freedom of expression, and fervency of soul, as well in preaching as in prayer, and would often treat his subject in a very comprehensive view, to the great delight, as well as profit, of his hearers. As to his religious sentiments, besides those concerning baptism, and the Sabbath, wherein he differed from many, there were others of greater importance,—the doctrines of our first reformers, which he imbibed in his younger years, and abode by them throughout his ministrations to the end of life.* With regard to his political character, he was a warm asserter and defender of the liberties of mankind; most zealously attached to the interest of his Majesty, King George, and his royal house; heartily loved all whom the king esteemed as his friends; and was greatly offended with those who gave into an unreasonable opposition to his ministers. His talents for public service, in civil affairs, were discerned by some persons of the first rank and eminency, who were pleased to honour him with their friendship and acquaintance. And the easy access which this gave him to those in power, rendered him capable of performing many good and kind offices to multitudes of persons, which he attended to with great cheerfulness and assiduity, and frequently with

* Dr. Stennett was a Sabbatarian; and, on the subject of the invitations of the gospel to his unconverted hearers, differed from Dr. Gill. The manner in which Dr. Gill speaks of his views of the truths of the gospel, furnishes another proof of that love and union among "Calvinists differing in opinion," which Mr. Brine had so strongly recommended.

happy success. So that his death is a public loss to mankind, particularly to the whole Dissenting interest, and especially with respect to its civil and political affairs. He was 'an indulgent husband, tender father, kind brother, amiable relation, and loving friend.'"

Dr. Stennett left a widow and several children to lament his loss. Two of his sons had been called to the ministry by the church in Little Wild-street; Joseph, his eldest, who was settled at Coate, in Oxfordshire, and Samuel, who first assisted his father, and then succeeded him in the pastoral office.

The following is a list of Dr. Stennett's works:—1. God's Awful Summons to a Sinful Nation, considered in a Sermon preached at Little Wild-street, in Commemoration of the High Wind, on the 27th of Nov. 1737: Amos iv. 12.—2. The Christian Strife for the Faith of the Gospel, preached at the Rev. Mr. Hill's Meeting-place in Thames-street, Feb. 9, 1798.—3. National Ingratitude exemplified, &c.—4. The Nature and Reward of True Liberality, preached at Watford, June 10, 1741, also in London; occasioned by the Death of Mr. Samuel Burch.—6. A Sermon on Ps. cxliv. 9—11, preached at Little Wild-street, the 17th of July, 1743, on account of the Battle at Dettingen; Second Edition.—7. Rabshakeh's Retreat; a Sermon preached Dec. 18, 1748, the Day appointed for a General Fast, on occasion of the present Rebellion.—8. A Thanksgiving Sermon, preach the 25th of April, 1749.

During the pastorate of Dr. Stennett, two other persons were called to the ministry, Mr. Joseph Palmer, who settled at Bilderstone and Battisford, in Suffolk; and Mr. Caleb Evans, who was afterwards the worthy and learned tutor of the academy at Bristol.

An eminent member of this church, Mr. John Taylor,* died in

* The biographical accounts of Messrs. Taylor, Burch, and Evans, are unavoidably postponed to the next volume for want of room.

the year 1729, leaving a legacy of forty pounds, for the purpose of a sermon being annually preached on November 27, in commemoration of the dreadful storm of wind in 1703.

Another useful deacon of this church was Mr. Samuel Burch, who died June 10, 1741, at Watford, in the eighty-second year of his age. He appears to have been a man of great liberality, and for the purpose of promoting a spirit of Christian liberality, he left a request in his will, that his pastor, Dr. Joseph Stennett, would preach from Isaiah xxxii. 8.

Mr. Allen Evans, whose firmness and integrity in the "sheriff's cause" has been mentioned, was until very late in life a member and a deacon of this church. He became a member during the ministry of Mr. John Piggott, when he was very young. For many successive years, he represented the congregation in the Society of Deputies, and was a manager of the Widow's Fund. He was one of the treasurers of the Baptist Fund for many years. He had been an oilman in Westminster, but had retired from business before his thirteen years' struggle with the city of London.

Mr. Evans died Feb. 17, 1767, in the 82nd year of his age. In consequence of his having united himself with the church in Barbican,* a few years before, his funeral sermon was

* For the purpose of setting this event in a clear light before the reader, he is informed that Mr. Evans, while a deacon and member of the church in Wild-street, in April 1756, communed at the Lord's table with the church in Paul's-alley, then under the care of Mr. Joseph Burroughs. Mr. Evans desired Mr. Joseph Stennett to inform the church that he had done so, and that it was his request, that "his wife and others of his family should sit down occasionally, as they should see fit, at Wild-street." The writer conjectures that Mrs. Allen, and others of the family, were members of the church in Barbican, whom the church in Little Wild-street refused to admit to their communion; on this account Mr. Evans sent word, that "on account of their want of charity, he should no longer consider himself a member with them." The church informed the messengers from the Barbican church, November 4, 1756, "that they had

preached by Mr. Daniel Noble at Barbican, on the 1st of March. This was published with the title "Religion, perfect Freedom;" and is founded upon John viii. 32, *And the truth shall make you free.*

The church found a worthy successor in the son of their late pastor, Mr. Samuel Stennett. The following is the letter they sent him upon that occasion:

"Reverend and Dear Sir,

"We, the church of Christ, meeting in Little Wild-street, lately under the pastoral care of the Rev. Dr. Joseph Stennett, your dear and honoured Father, cannot omit the earliest opportunity of assuring you of our most tender sympathy on occasion of the mournful providence which has removed from you a most affectionate and indulgent father, and from us a most faithful and worthy pastor.

We forbear to mention the great loss which the church of Christ in general, as well as this particular branch of it, has sustained by this awful stroke, that we may not afresh open the springs of your sorrow, and add to the weight of your affliction, which we are sensible must be very great upon this occasion. But we pray God to support and comfort you, and your honoured mother, and the whole family, under this trying dispensation. And we cannot but hope and trust that that God, who doth not afflict willingly his own children, and who will not lay upon them more than he will enable them to bear, but who is of tender mercy and full of compassion, and who has so graciously supported you all hitherto, will still appear for you, and grant you his consolations, which we doubt not you have experienced to be neither few nor small.

"We cannot but take this opportunity to return you our most

Mr. Evans in much regard; that they knew of no wilful offence given him; that as he had rent himself from them, and thereby dissolved the relationship between them, they could not dismiss him, but as to his moral character they had no charge against him."

hearty and unfeigned thanks for your services in the ministry amongst us, and to assure you of the great and general acceptance with which your ministrations have been attended; and we should be very wanting to ourselves, did we not express our hope and earnest desire of again enjoying your labours, as soon as your afflictive circumstances will permit; and that you will in due time be prevailed upon to accept of the pastoral office amongst us, which is a step that appears to us so plainly pointed out by providence, that we promise ourselves your indulgence in this early mention of it.

And now, dear Sir, we heartily commend you to the divine favour and protection, wishing you the continuance of his gracious support, that a large portion of the blessed Spirit may rest upon you, and that you may have abundance of success in promoting the interest of our common Lord and Redeemer: and remain, your affectionate brethren in Christ."

Signed by thirty-two brethren.

The church in Wild-street contributed to the Baptist Fund, at the time to which we have brought its history, about a hundred and fifty pounds per annum. It is at present under the care of Mr. James Hargreaves.

CHURCH IN EAGLE-STREET.

IN giving the history of this church, the writer expresses his regret, that like many other of the Dissenting churches, it owes its rise to strife and debate, which ended in division and separation. If brotherly love had been cultivated, and Christian zeal manifested, our churches might have peaceably branched out in different directions, and then their histories would have been lovely and of good report, instead of furnishing our enemies with occasion for reproaching Dissenters with restless and unsettled notions, and with quarrelsome and in-

subordinate dispositions. But while we condemn the evil passions which have at times produced the establishment of new churches, we cannot but admire the overruling providence of God, which has caused even these things to subserve the accomplishment of divine purposes, and "turned out rather for the furtherance of the gospel." No one will deny that circumstances may arise in a congregational church, which not only warrant, but demand a separation, if improper measures cannot otherwise be counteracted nor prevented. Such for instance is the case, when any of the members are deprived of their just rights in voting on matters involving their spiritual privileges. The occasion which led to the formation of the church in Eagle-street, was, (as it has been already stated in our account of Little Wild-street,) because the sisters were prevented from giving their votes on a question relating to the *rejection*, when they had always been admitted to vote in the *choice* of a pastor.

The records of the church in Eagle-street, commence with the following statement: "Whereas, in the year 1735-36, there arose an unhappy dispute in the dissenting congregation of Baptists, that then met in Little Wild-street; we, whose names are hereunto subscribed, (being the majority of members of the said congregation,) do in the fear and presence of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, agree to continue as a church of Jesus Christ, baptized upon profession of faith, to worship Him through the influence of his Holy Spirit, according to the directions given us in his word." This is signed by fifty-two men, and thirty-nine women, besides the pastor, Mr. Andrew Gifford.

After leaving the meeting-house in Little Wild-street, they met for a time in Red-cross-street, and afterwards in Bear Yard, Lincoln's Inn Fields. Several persons were baptized while the church was thus circumstanced, or as the records express it, "during the troubles of the church," by the pastor, in the baptistery in Fair-street, Horselydown.

While thus unsettled as a congregation, they were erecting

a new meeting-house in Eagle Street, Red Lion Square, Holborn; which was a neat square building, with three galleries, and thirty-eight seats below, eighteen of which were double; it was capable of containing about four hundred persons, and was opened for public worship, Lord's day, Feb. 20, 1736-37, when Mr. Gifford preached from Isa. lxiii. 16. *Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou O Lord art our Father, our Redeemer; thy name is everlasting.* It seems hardly necessary to remind the reader, that this text was selected in allusion to the opprobrium under which the pastor and church laboured when thus constrained to open a new place for the worship of God. The place had been used on Feb. 17th, the Thursday preceding, when "a solemn day of fasting and prayer was held for a blessing on the church in that place, when the Lord gave us a resting-place, after many great and sore troubles." On that day, the church covenant was agreed to, and signed by about one hundred members. Here Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Andrew Gifford, continued to preach with great popularity and success. In the year 1760, twenty-four years from its first opening, it was found necessary to enlarge the meeting-house by adding about twenty feet to its length, and erecting an additional gallery behind the pulpit; it now held six hundred persons. In 1748, the baptistery was made, and first used in that year.

In the year 1820 the meeting-house was again very considerably enlarged, and it will now contain about 900 persons. There is a school-room also, in which are instructed, on the the Lord's day, 200 children.

Among the persons who adhered to Mr. Gifford, and who left Little Wild-street with him, was that liberal benefactor Mr. John Payne. In our account of the church at a former period, mention was made of his presenting twelve silver cups to be used at the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. The following further statement in reference to these cups, which are in

monthly use by the church, I find in the records inserted in the hand writing of Mr. Payne :—

"Whereas I, John Payne, did in October, 1734, give to the congregation of Baptists that then met in Little Wilde Street, twelve silver cups for the use of the Lord's table, and there happened a difference in the said congregation in April, 1735, which was agreed to be left to the arbitration of several gentlemen; who awarded me back the said silver cus as m y own property:—Now I do hereby make a free gift of the above said silver cups to Mr. Andrew Gifford, pastor, Mr. John Egby, Mr. Richard Slade, Mr. John Brailsford, and Mr. Hugh Amony, deacons of the protestant congregation of Baptists under the care of Mr. Andrew Gifford, now meeting in Eagle Street, in the parish of St. George, Bloomsbury, *in trust* to them and their successors, for the use of the said congregation at the Lord's table; and my intention, will, and desire is, that the said twelve silver cups, shall be, and remain to them, and their successors, and the majority of members being communicants of the said congregation in Eagle Street, *both men and women*, for the said use of the Lord's table for ever. As witness my hand,

April 3, 1737. JOHN PAYNE.

"Memorandum, that the words *Little Wylde* were taken out by my order, and the word *Eagle* engraved in their room."

The following is the inscription referred to by Mr. Payne, which is round the bottom of each cup, viz. "The gift of brother John Payne to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation now meeting in Eagle Street; baptized upon a personal profession of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Oct. 4, 1734."

This excellent man, who was a turner, rendered considerable assistance towards the expense of building the meeting-house, and at his death, he left the church residuary legatee to a considerable estate; but which was not obtained without a tedious and expensive suit in chancery. He died Sept. 6, 1757, and his

death is noticed in the church book in an affectionate and respectful manner.

The following are the particulars I have been able to collect respecting the first pastor of the church in Eagle Street, the Rev. Andrew Gifford, D. D. He was born at Bristol, on Saturday, Aug. 17, 1700. He took his name from that of his venerable grandfather, the very excellent pastor of the Pithay church in that city. His father was Emanuel Gifford, who was also a very respectable pastor of that church.*

The subject of our memoir was at an early period of his life made acquainted with the power of divine grace, and was bap-

* The following is the inscription on his grave-stone in the Baptist burying ground, Bristol. "Here lieth all that was mortal, of a faithful and wise servant of Christ. EMANUEL, son of that truly apostolical man of God, ANDREW GIFFORD; with whom in his youth he first suffered and then laboured twenty-eight years in the vineyard; and was not long after him suddenly called to receive his hire, in the fifty-first year of his age, Oct. 4, 1724.

"Here also sleep the remains of his beloved wife ELEANOR, the survivor of all the sufferers in Newgate, [Bristol] in the last century, for the sake of a good conscience; eminent for piety, industry, prudence, patience, and meekness.

"These died in the faith. *Happy is that people whose God is the Lord;* with which words she calmly bid adieu to time, Feb. 24, 1738, in the seventy-sixth year of her pilgrimage."

It appears that Mrs. Gifford came to London after her husband's death, to reside with her son. Her death is thus noticed in the records of the church of Eagle-street, in the handwriting of Dr. Gifford:—"Feb. 24, 1738. This day our sister Eleanor Gifford exchanged this life for a better, and a place in the church militant below, for one in the church triumphant above. She was for many years an honourable member of the church in the Pithay, Bristol, and was the last survivor of that church, who was honoured with imprisonment in Newgate there, for adhering to the despised and persecuted cause of Jesus, in the latter part of King Charles the Second's reign. She died in a good old age, aged above 75. Her constant motto was, *Happy is the people whose God is the Lord.*"

tized upon a profession of his faith, Aug. 2, 1715. It being considered by the church that he possessed promising gifts, he was soon after sent to the academy at Tewkesbury, kept by that eminent scholar, the Rev. Mr. Jones. Some of his fellow students were Darracott, afterwards of Wellington, whose memoirs have been published under the title of "The Star in the West," by the Rev. Mr. Bennett of Rotherham; and Dr. Secker, who by conforming to the established church, arose to the high worldly distinction of Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr. Gifford finished his studies under the direction of the celebrated Dr. Ward, of Gresham College. In a letter written by that gentleman to the Rev. Emanuel Gifford, of Bristol, dated Gresham College, June 6, 1723, the following honourable testimonial is borne to the talents and application of his pupil:—"I have the pleasure to tell you, that since your son has been with me, he has pursued his studies with great application, and in my apprehension to good advantage."

Mr. Gifford was at this time a member of the Pinners'-hall church, Devonshire-square, to which he had been dismissed for the purpose of his attending Gresham College, In a letter written by the Rev. Thomas Richardson, the pastor, July 23, 1723, to Mr. Emanuel Gifford, he says, "Your son having been dismissed from you to us, at his request, I thought it my duty to watch over him; and as I believe him to be a young gentleman of great seriousness and good sense; and as he has spent some years in studies preparative to the ministry, in which I hope (if it please God to give him health) he will be very useful; I desired him about a week before our last church meeting, to speak before the members only, from some text of Scripture; but I could not prevail upon him any thing more than to go to prayer," &c. Mr. Gifford was first settled at Nottingham for about two years; he then returned to Bristol, where he assisted Mr. Bernard Foskett.

After the death of Mr. Mark Key, pastor of the Devonshire-

square church, in 1726, they resolved to send a letter to Mr. Gifford, "to invite him to London to have a further taste of his gift, in order, if it should prove acceptable, to call him to that work."

From this it should seem that Mr. Gifford had preached already to the church, probably while at Gresham College.

The letter sent him was the following, dated Sept. 26, 1726.

"*The Church of Christ meeting in Devonshire-square, London, late under the pastoral care of our late dear and honoured brother, Mr. Mark Key, to our beloved brother, Mr. Andrew Gifford, sendeth greeting,*

"SIR,

"It having pleased our heavenly father to take from us our dear pastor, and the hopes of many of us among ourselves being expired; the taste that Providence gave us of your ministerial gifts induced us the last Lord's day sevennight, at our church meeting, to propose that you should be entreated to come and remain some time with us; and if our gracious God shall incline our hearts to each other, we shall not be long as sheep without a shepherd.

"Our bond of love being firm, we the more chearfully in the name of the church, desire you will please to come to us with all convenient speed, and we trust all will tend to the glory of God; to whose protection we commit you, and subscribe ourselves in the bonds of the gospel."

Signed by seventeen brethren.

To this Mr. Gifford replied in the November following, that "something extraordinary had occurred which he could neither foresee nor prevent, which induced him to request the church would wait for him till the spring."

From some cautions to avoid the snares of popularity, given to Mr. Gifford, while at Nottingham, by his worthy friend the Rev. Mr. Noble, of Bristol, who had succeeded his father at the Pithay, it is probable that his preaching had attracted much of

the public attention. He removed to London in December, 1729, and the letter of dismission from Nottingham, printed in our account of the church in Little Wild-street, is a very honourable testimony to his character.

Of his settlement at Little Wild-street, and of the troubles into which he was unexpectedly and suddenly plunged in that connection, after being very respectfully and usefully employed as the pastor of that church for nearly six years, we have already given the painful relation.

About the year 1731, while Mr. Gifford was pastor of the church in Little Wild-street, he had contracted an intimate acquaintance with Sir Richard Ellys, Bart. the learned author of Fortuita Sacra, consisting of Critical Notes upon certain Texts of Scripture * Mr. Gifford was chaplain to the family of Sir Richard for many years, taking the lead in family worship, especially in morning and evening prayer. For this office he received forty guineas annually, as a present from Sir Richard, till his death ; and from his lady also till about the year 1745, when she married again.

Mr. Gifford marked the sense he entertained of the friendship of Sir Richard Ellys, by dedicating a sermon to him preached in Little Wild-street, Nov. 27, 1734, in commemoration of the high wind in 1703. In this Mr. Gifford stiles himself, "your much obliged and affectionate servant in the gospel;" and prays "that yours, and your good lady's unaffected piety, prudent

* In Dr. Doddridge's Family Expositor, there is a note upon Matthew vi. 16, in which that learned and eminently distinguished writer says of Sir Richard Ellys, Bart., "The learned author of Fortuita Sacra, p. 13—22, has rendered it unnecessary for me to add any thing more on this, or the following verses."

Sir Richard Ellys had a seat in the House of Commons, through several successive Parliaments. He was at the latter part of his life, a member of Mr. Bradbury's church in New Court, Carey Street. There is a short but highly wrought eulogium upon him, in the History of Dissenters, by Messrs. Bogue and Bennett, vol. iv. p. 6.

zeal, and disinterested benevolence, may long continue ornamental to your country, and blessings to the church of Christ."

He visited Edinburgh in this year, and was honoured with the freedom of that city; he was in 1754 also presented with a diploma, creating him doctor in divinity, from the Marischal College at Aberdeen.

In the year 1757 he was appointed assistant librarian of the British Museum. The doctor had been some time before a member of the Antiquarian Society. He was also personally acquainted with the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, with Archbishop Herring, and with the Speaker Onslow. But it was the affection of his unshaken patron, Sir Richard Ellys, which procured him that distinguished station; doubtless from a persuasion of his eminent qualifications for the situation. It is said that the doctor's private collection of coins was, before that time, one of the most curious in Britain, and had been purchased by King George II. as an addition to his own cabinet. In a perfect acquaintance with ancient coins and manuscripts, it is said he eminently excelled.

In this station, which he continued to fill till his death, his opportunites for improvement were very much enlarged, and having a talent to receive and communicate knowledge with unaffected politeness, his acquaintance among the nobility and gentry was very extensive. Some of them exchanged visits with him, and some of the first rank discovered their respect for him, either by their correspondence, or by an accasional attendance upon his ministry at the meeting-house in Eagle-street. Among these are mentioned, the Marquis of Lothian, the Earl of Halifax, Lord Dartmouth, Lady Buchan, Lady Huntingdon, &c.*

* There are some pleasing anecdotes related of the Doctor while he was employed in showing the Museum. Some gentlemen were inspecting the Museum under the Doctor's guidance, amongst whom was a profane

The attendance required at the Museum did not render him inattentive to his pastoral duties, nor did his acquaintance with persons in the higher circles of life, make him inaccessible to the people of his flock. His house, in a court at the north-west corner of Queen-square, was always open for their reception, and he always met them with a cheerful welcome.

From about the year 1760 to the close of his life, a period of twenty-four years, he preached with great acceptance, once a month, at the Lord's-day evening lecture, St. Helen's, in connection with several ministers of the independent denomination.

Dr. Gifford was very intimate with that eminent servant of Christ, the Rev. George Whitefield; he attended him for the purpose of shewing his respect for his character, when Mr. Whitefield laid the first stone of the chapel in Tottenham-court-road; and afterwards preached for him at the tabernacle in

youth, who hardly uttered a sentence without taking the name of the Lord in vain. The Doctor, who had kept his eye upon him, was at length asked by him, 'Whether they had not a certain very ancient manuscript there?' On coming to it, the Doctor presenting it, asked the youth if he could read it? Being answered in the affirmative, the Doctor wished him to read a paragraph, which was, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* The irreverent youth read, and blushed; the countenances of his companions seemed to acknowledge the justness of the reproof, and the polite and Christian manner in which it was administered. *Funeral Sermon by Dr. Rippon, Note, p.* 41.

On another occasion, a gentleman who was looking at some natural curiosities, swore in a shocking manner, calling them ugly, monstrous, &c. The Doctor incensed at the vulgarity and impiety expressed by his reviling the works of the all-wise and bountiful Creator, gently led him to a large glass which stood in the room, and firmly asked him to look there and judge whether there was any thing in the works of creation, more monstrous than himself! This last story was related to the writer, when he once accidentally met at the British Museum, the late Rev. Mr. Jermain, Minister of the Scotch Church, Oxenden Street, London, and author of the "Memoirs of Pious Women," &c.

Moorfields. It is said that the doctor being once met in his way to Tottenham Court Chapel, was asked if he was going to hear Mr. Whitefield; he replied, "I am going to light my farthing rushlight at his flaming torch."

The ministry of Dr. Gifford was eminently useful in the conversion of sinners, and in building up the church of God under his pastoral care. He was a pathetic, and yet powerful preacher, uniting in his character the Barnabas and the Boanerges. His sermons were highly evangelical; he was a Calvinist of the old school, his system having been formed upon the confession of faith of the Baptist churches, published by the assembly in 1689. The main topics of his discourses were, the fall of man,—redemption by Christ,—the divinity of our Lord,—the work of the Spirit,—the sweetness of the promises,—the perseverance of saints in holiness to heaven. After he had briefly explained his text, with these and similar doctrines, he made a direct appeal to the heart, interested all the passions of the soul, and summoned conscience before a solemn tribunal. His biographer, Dr. Rippon, says of him, "His heart was in the work, and upon some occasions, particularly, it might have been said of him as of one of the reformers, *Vividas vultus, vividi oculi, vividæ manus, denique omnia vivida,* i. e. his countenance was alive, his eyes were alive, his hands were alive, in short all were alive. If ever any man was all alive in the public service of God, Dr. Gifford was the man, and he retained his evangelical savour and his stated and occasional labours, even to the very last, with but very little abatement; insomuch that when he was above eighty years of age, he was more active and zealous in his master's work, than many young men of twenty-five. It was thus, through a divine blessing upon his labours, that he kept up a numerous auditory, and made every one say, what indeed appears true, 'that the doctor would die popular.'"

It is to the honour of this worthy pastor, that he was always humble, notwithstanding the success which attended his la-

bours, and the respect with which he was treated. When he heard a person say, that the Lord had blessed his ministry to them, he used with great modesty, and sometimes with tears to reply, "Give God the praise, the man is a sinner."

When he found persons, especially if they were young females, much intimidated at the prospect of speaking their experience before the church, he would affectionately encourage them by saying, "My dear child, you will never have such another opportunity of speaking to the honour of the Lord Jesus, and to the praise of the riches of his grace while you live."

In his friendly and pastoral visits he was always cheerful, and serious. When he entered a house he would begin the conversation by familiarly asking, "What do you think of Jesus Christ? Do you, my dear child, love the Lord Jesus Christ?" When he prayed in the families which he visited, he was remarkably affectionate, and so very particular in suiting his petitions and thanksgivings to the cases of the individuals who composed them, that many had reason to bless God for his prayers as well as his sermons.

In the administration of the ordinance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, he was uncommonly lively and spiritual. While he was of a very catholic spirit, and heartily loved good men of every denomination, he was a zealous Baptist, and particularly happy when attending to that divine rite. He used to say, when he was unwell, and in prospect of administering that ordinance, "I shall get well, I hope, if I can but go and baptize." He frequently said, when some have spoken of the danger attending such a service to his health, "I never took cold by baptizing, that I can recollect, in my life."*

* Dr. Gifford and Mr. Gwennap, were employed in baptizing forty-six persons in the year 1767, in the river at the back of the house belonging to Mr. Ebenezer Hollick, a respectable member of the church at Cambridge. A very picturesque description of this "public baptism" is given in Robinson's History of Baptism, 541.

The last time he attended to the Lord's Supper with his beloved charge was on June 6, 1784, when he went to the table very weak and low; and the first sentence he uttered was, *With my soul have I desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer.* He broke the bread, but was not able to pour out the wine. He dwelt with peculiar emphasis upon the words, (afterwards selected by Dr. Rippon for his funeral text,) *Thou hast in love to my soul, cast all my sins behind thy back.* On the next evening, Monday June 7, he preached a sermon to the "Friendly Benefit Society," which he had established for pious men, and which still conducts its business in the vestry of Eagle-street meeting-house. His text was, (and this was the last from which he preached,) Heb. xiii. 7. *Let brotherly love continue.* After the sermon he conversed freely with some of the members of the society, and at parting he said with a cheerful voice, "Farewell;" and then coming back to the vestry, he took as it were a parting look of the meeting-house, and of his old friends, repeating emphatically, "Farewell." This was the last time he ever entered the meeting.

In his last days, while confined by affliction, his friends who visited him said, they found him always in a happy, spiritual, resigned frame; his soul resting on Christ alone for salva-

Mr. Robinson and Dr. Gifford, were intimately acquainted. The Doctor wished Mr. Robinson to undertake to write a history of the Baptists; and for that purpose he offered him access to the British Museum, and also a room in his house for the inspection of manuscripts, &c. Many of the leading men among the Baptists in London, held a meeting for the purpose of promoting this object, at the King's-head in the Poultry, Nov. 6th, 1781, when Dr. Gifford was in the chair. At that meeting, resolutions were passed, requesting Mr. Robinson to come to London early in the week before the second Lord's day in every month, and stay till the latter end of the following week, for the purpose of collecting materials for the said work, and to preach at Dr. Gifford's on the Lord's-day evening, &c. See Dyer's Life of Robinson, p. 214.

tion.* He often cried out under his heavy pains, but would presently say, "I cannot help groaning, but though I groan, I trust I do not grumble." Three days before his death, being asked how he did; he said, "I am in great pain, but bless God, this is not hell! blessed be God, this is not hell! blessed be God for Jesus Christ." In the last hours of life, being asked whether any of his friends should be sent for, he replied, "I want no friend but Christ; I wish to see no friend but Christ." Some of his last words were, "Oh, what should I do now, were it not for Jesus Christ? What should I do now, were it not for an interest in Jesus Christ?" Thus while affectionately recommending the Saviour to those who were about his bed, he fell asleep in Jesus, about eight o'clock, Saturday evening, June 19, 1784; in the eighty-fourth year of his age; and about the sixtieth of his public ministry.

The remains of Dr. Gifford were interred on Friday morning, July 2, 1784, in Bunhill-fields, very early in the morning; according to the request of the deceased, who had often wished he might be buried, even earlier than six o'clock, "to testify his faith in the resurrection of Christ, who arose early on the first day of the week, and likewise his hope of the resurrection morning at the last day." It was on this occasion, that the very intimate friend of Dr. Gifford, the Rev. John Ryland of Northampton, while standing on a tomb-stone, delivered that remarkable oration, contrasting the first and second coming of Christ; the powerful eloquence of which has been compared,

* He was visited during the time of his last illness by that eminently useful clergyman, the Rev. William Romaine, M. A. Rector of St. Ann's Blackfriars, and Lecturer at St. Dunstan's Fleet-street. This good man it is said, was very much attached to Dr. Gifford, and (as well as the Rev. Augustus Toplady,) was sometimes a hearer in the Meeting-house, Eagle-street. His last interview was very affecting, as the two holy men had a very affectionate meeting, and a most affecting parting.

by no incompetent judge, to the thundering eloquence of Demosthenes. The closing sentences are, "Who can tell the triumphs of our Redeemer's soul, in the prospect he had of this island of Great Britain, of London, and its ministers and churches; of his saving the dear deceased man, and millions more yet unborn!

"With respect to our departed friend, who has left our world at the age of eighty-four, it is no hard matter to tell where a man is gone, who has lived almost all his life, or if we can only say fifty years, in the exercise of his faith in Christ, and repentance towards God: in love to mankind, preaching in an evangelical strain through the whole course of his ministry. As to his character I will leave that to be set in a proper light by my younger brother. And now we can with the greatest truth use the common words, in the form of service in the Church of England;—"We commit this body to the ground, in sure and certain hope of a resurrection to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

"Farewell, thou dear old man! We leave thee in possession of death till the resurrection day: but we will bear witness against thee, oh king of terrors, at the mouth of this dungeon; thou shalt not always have possession of this dead body; it shall be demanded of thee by the great Conqueror, and at that moment thou shalt resign thy prisoner. Oh ye ministers of Christ, ye people of God, ye surrounding spectators, prepare, prepare to meet this old servant of Christ, at that day, at that hour, when this whole place shall be all nothing, but life and death shall be swallowed up in victory."

The funeral sermon was preached at Eagle-street meeting the following Lord's day, in the afternoon, by the Rev. Dr. Rippon, from Isa. xxxviii. 7, and was afterwards published with the address at the grave appended to it. From this publication, principally, the preceding account of Dr. Gifford has been derived.

Dr. Gifford published two sermons while at Little Wild-street; one from Psalm cxlviii. 8. *Stormy wind fulfilling his word;* and another from John iii. 8. *The wind bloweth where it listeth,* &c. He published also the substance of four sermons preached at the Wednesday evening lecture.—An exhortation delivered by him at the ordination of his nephew, Mr. Joseph Gwennap, with two letters, were published, with that ordination service by Mr. Joseph Potts, in 1764. The text is 1 Tim. iv. 16. *Take heed unto thyself, and unto thy doctrine,* &c.—And a little piece which has been extensively circulated is attributed to him, entitled, "A Bundle of Myrrh."*

To preserve a specimen of the Doctor's preaching, the following extract is made from the close of the sermon preached Nov. 27, 1734, which is dedicated to Sir Richard Ellys, Bart. It is founded upon Ps. cxlviii. *Stormy winds fulfil thy word,* &c.

"1. Do stormy winds praise God? Oh the horrid stupidity and ingratitude of men, who receive their all from him, and yet make no returns of acknowledgment or praise! Every favourable providence such receive, will be hereafter an aggravation of their folly and impiety; and if they are not swept away by the besom of destruction in this world, what a dreadful storm will overtake them in the next; Isa. xi. 6. Such is the sad insensibility of some,—such is their horrid contempt of divine judgments, that they regard not the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands: even when his hand is lifted up they will not see; but are ready to say, Who is the

* The writer has heard it questioned whether Dr. Gifford was the author of that excellent evangelical little tract. It bears the marks of his scriptural and sententious style. When the writer of this first settled at Eagle-street, he found, upon a shelf in the vestry, many hundreds of that work in the French language, which had been printed in the time of the American war for the use of French prisoners. They were given away in 1804, to French prisoners in Portsmouth harbour, and in Portchester Castle.

Almighty, that we should obey his voice? But they shall see and feel his power too, to their eternal cost, when he hurries them away in a *fiery whirlwind, both living and in his wrath,* Ps. lviii. 9.

"2. Do stormy winds fulfil God's word? how much more should we!—Tremble, sinners, at his judgments threatened therein: how loud a call is this providence to unfeigned humility and deep repentance for our crying sins, whereby we deserve and provoke his resentment, and none more than the impious slights put upon his word. Oh may his Spirit be poured out from on high, to incline us to return to him with all our hearts, and *prepare us to meet him,* (Amos iv. 12,) when he is rising out of his place: whilst the cup of trembling is put into other nation's hands, and his judgments are in the earth, it will be our mercy to hear and fear, and be enabled by his grace to learn and practise righteousness! If Elijah was brought to attend to the soft still voice of his word;—by the louder sound of a rattling whirlwind, why should not we? If the giving forth the Law was attended with such blackness and tempest as made the beholders exceedingly fear and quake; what must the breach of it be? Surely *our God is a consuming fire.* The authority it comes with demands our reverence; and such sweetness shines in it as commands our love. Let us, therefore, in the strength of Christ, labour to obey and comply with its precepts, which are indeed, *holy, just, and good;* calculated every way to promote our happiness. The word of God is a sure and perfect rule; and as many as, through the influences of the Holy Spirit promised therein, walk according to it, may humbly hope for mercy and peace. Now the great command of it is to fly to the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom alone there is security and rest: 'tis he that stays the murmuring thunder of divine vengeance, and prevents the clouds, big with terror and destructions, from bursting on our guilty

heads: *There is no salvation in any other;* he only can *deliver from the wrath to come.* Out of him, therefore you are for ever undone. If any are by his convincing Spirit made sensible of this, and are with one we read of when in a storm, crying out, *What shall I do to be saved?* such may look unto Jesus, depend on his merit, plead his righteousness, and beg that he would write his law in their hearts, and put his fear into their inward parts. He graciously assures such comers unto him, that *he will in no wise cast out.* Having so done, you may safely depend upon it; seeing he is faithful that has promised: and rejoice in it as your charter for heaven, seeing not one good word of all that he hath spoken shall ever go unfulfilled: he will guide you by his counsel, and afterwards receive you to his glory. *Now unto the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the one only living and true God, be dominion and praise, for ever.* Amen.

In January, 1779, Dr. Gifford presented fifty pounds to the managers of the Baptist Fund, by the hands of James Smith; it was kindly received, and the thanks of the managers respectfully presented to Dr. Gifford for his said gift.

Dr. Gifford left by his will four hundred pounds, in the three per cents. for the use of the minister and the poor of the church in Eagle-street. He left also a small sum for the poor members, and a legacy to each of the seven deacons, with some small bequests to a few ministers of his acquaintance. His valuable books, pictures, and manuscripts, with a vast variety of curiosities, he bequeathed to the Baptist Academy at Bristol; and caused an elegant room to be erected, called "Gifford's Museum." The value of this legacy was estimated at £1000. He probably was in some measure influenced to do this on account of his having been an assistant in the ministry and the Academy to Mr. Bernard Foskett, from Jan. 11, 1727, till he removed to London. He wished also to have taken an active part in procuring a charter and an endowment for this

seminary as a college, but the modesty of the tutors, Messrs. Evans and Newton, prevented him from promoting that object.*

In the new building, which has since been erected for the academy at Bristol, the library and museum contains these valuable presents, where the Doctor's name is duly honoured; and his curiosities are shown for the gratification of its numerous visitors. Very good portraits of his venerable grandfather, of himself, and his two wives, are among its ornaments. There is an excellent painting, too, of the Doctor, (from whence his engravings, holding Magna Charta and the Alexandrian MS. in his hand, appear to be taken,) in the British Museum, which a few years since was in one of the public rooms of that institution: there is also a bust, which is said to be an excellent likeness, in the vestry of Eagle-street meeting-house.

The following is the inscription in the Museum, which has been Englished by my friend Mr. John Satchell:—

* It was doubtless to Dr. Gifford that the Rev. Robert Robinson alludes, when telling his friend, in 1781, the Rev. Daniel Turner, of Abingdon, his plan for a Baptist college. "I know," says he, "a gentleman who would give books, manuscripts, &c. to such a house, worth 1000*l.*" In another place he says, "The design of the Rev. Andrew Gifford of introducing into the Baptist churches sound and sufficient learning, and, for this purpose of bestowing certain valuable original paintings, books, &c. would have been glorious in any man, and is most of all so in a man whose abilities and merits have not been sufficiently understood in some few of our leading churches. The Baptist cause wants only learning to give it credit and success. Let the first and best room in the Baptist college be called the 'Giffordian Room,' and be used always to contain the pictures, &c. of Dr. Gifford." *Dyer's Life of Robinson*, pp. 129, 469, 470.

D. O. M. P. F. S.
IN VSVM. JVVENTVT.
GYMNASIOLI
HVJVSMODI BAPTISTI.I.
MVNIFICENTIA. EDW. TERRIL.
OLIM INSTITVTI.
MVSEVM. HOC. D. D. D.
A. GIFFORD, D.D.
ÆT. LXXX. AVG. XXVIII.
MDCCLXXX.
HVG. ET CALEB EVANS, A.M. ET JAC. NEWTON,
GYMNASIARCHIS.

TRANSLATION.

To God, Father, Son, and Spirit,
For the use of this Baptist Academy,
Formerly founded by the munificence of Edward Terrill,
this Museum was given by
A. Gifford, D. D.
in the 80th year of his age, August 28, 1780,
and dedicated to Hugh and Caleb Evans, M. A. and James Newton,
Masters.

There is a plain head-stone in Bunhill-fields, on which is the following inscription:—

H. S. E.
A. GIFFORD; D.D. P. F.
VIX ANN. LXXXIIII.
MDCCLXXXIIII.

The labours of Dr. Gifford appear to have been highly esteemed by those who were members of the church while under his care; of whom there are but four or five now living: one of these is Mr. James Pritt, of Wood-street, who has been upwards of fifty years a member, and for more than forty-six a a deacon.

The Doctor was twice married. By his first wife, Martha Ware, he had two sons, and by his second, Grace Paynter, he had one; but all three of his children died in their infancy: his second wife died more than twenty years before him. Of Mrs. Martha Gifford, in her funeral sermon, Dr. John Gill says, "Upon the testimony of those that knew her, which I believe is just and to be depended upon, I shall say something of her character. It pleased God to call her by his grace, very early, and to engage her heart betimes to give up herself not only to the Lord, but to a church of Christ, by the will of God, to walk with his people in the ordinances of his gospel; and as it was through the preaching of the doctrines of grace that she was at first wrought upon, so she ever retained a value for them, and an esteem of them. God, in his providence, indulged her with a plenty of worldly substance; but this fulness was without forgetfulness of her God, or pride and haughtiness towards her fellow-creatures. As she was of an easy temper and disposition, and in easy circumstances in life, so the former was without indolence, and the latter not without industry. She had firmness and resolution of mind, both in the affairs of religion and the things of this life, but without obstinacy and stubbornness. She was constant and zealous in the exercise of religious duties, but without dependance upon them, or ostentation in them. In her last hours, this passage of Scripture I have been discoursing from, (Gen. iii. 15,) and indeed the whole chapter, was very refreshing to her, when, as she said, the adversary was very busy; but Christ, the seed of woman, who has bruised the serpents' head, appeared to her relief, and graciously assured her, that he who comes to him, he will in no wise cast out, and that he had loved her with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness had drawn her to himself; from whence there is reason to conclude a comfortable and well-grounded hope of her everlasting salvation and happiness. Wherefore it becomes her relatives and friends not to *sorrow as others who have no*

hope; for if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Mrs. Grace Gifford, whose maiden name was Paynter, it appears was a member of the church in Eagle-street, which she joined Oct. 9, 1737. I have no account when this union took place; but her death is thus affectionately recorded by her surviving and sorrowing husband in the church-book:—"Nov. 28, 1762, my dear help-meet, Grace Gifford, after a tedious illness of fourteen weeks, during which she kept her bed, with great patience and submission, went smiling in death to glory. Her funeral sermon was preached by brother Brittain, from Sol. Song. ii. 4. *He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love:* which was the word which set her at liberty. She was buried the same day the sermon was preached, December 5, at sun-rising, in Bunhill-fields; where a hymn was sung according to her request; and a young woman was, it is to be hoped, converted by what was spoken by brother Brittain on the occasion there."

The church in Eagle-street retains a small token of the affectionate respect of this good woman. Two years before her death she presented, in connexion with her husband, a handsome silver tankard for the use of the Lord's table; on this is engraven the Doctor's coat of arms, with the words *Meliora Spero*, i. e. "I will hope for better things;" and the following inscription:—"The Gift of Andrew and Grace Gifford, to the Protestant Dissenting Congregation of Baptists, in Eagle-street, London, MDCCLX."

At the commencement of this account, Mr. John Payne was noticed as having been a liberal benefactor to the church: one moiety of the interest belongs to the pastor for the time being, and the other is applicable to the rent of the meeting-house, repairs, &c. at the discretion of the deacons: the name also of a benefactress must not be written in the dust. This was Mrs. Priscilla Edwards, who, in 1756, presented the

church with two silver dishes for the use of the Lord's table, and at her death left one hundred pounds in the three per cents. "the interest for the support of the ministry in Eagle-street for ever." Dr. Andrew Gifford left four hundred pounds in the three per cents. Mr. William Tongue, who joined the church in 1756, though he appears to have been an occasional member many years before, in that year gave the church a silver tankard for the use of the Lord's table. And a few years since, the late Mrs. Barbara George, of Holywell-street, presented, for the same use, a pair of silver candlesticks. To these must be added the names of Mrs. Elizabeth Lascelles, and Mrs. Thomas, who bequeathed legacies for the use of the church.

CONCLUSION.

AND now, having by divine help, and notwithstanding many interruptions from accidents, bodily indisposition, and other circumstances, brought the Volume to a close, the Author, most solemnly, in the first place, consecrates it to the honour of the Redeemer, to whose mercy he owes all his happiness in the present life, and his hopes of blessedness in that which is to come. He then devotes it to the service of the churches of that Denomination of which he is an unworthy member and minister; intreating those, into whose hands the Volume may come, to read it without prejudice, and with the determination to follow those whose memoirs it contains, so far as they followed Christ. Ministers and Deacons, on whom the discipline of the churches chiefly depends, will do well to notice the history of those communities which have either declined or have become extinct, that they may avoid the shoals on which they have been stranded, or the rocks on which they were ship-

wrecked. Many things will be found in this Volume adapted both for admonition and imitation, for reproof and encouragement, for warning and consolation; affording abundant proof that HE who holds his faithful ministers as *stars in his right hand*, still walks in the midst of his churches, comparable, while uncorrupted, to *golden candlesticks*; but letting all the churches know either by the tokens of his approbation, or by the expressions of his displeasure, that he *searcheth the reins and the hearts, and gives unto every one of them according to their works.* Rev. ii. 23. The author concludes by earnestly imploring for all the churches of Christ, whether of his own, or of any other denomination of Christians, an abundant supply of the Spirit of Christ, and all the blessings connected with its most copious effusion and richest influence; and by enjoining upon all who bear the Christian name, a rigid and circumspect attention to the apostolic exhortations, *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.* Phil. iv. 8, 9.

INDEX.

ABBOT, MORDECAI, Esq. Member of the church in Pinners'-hall, 378. fills offices in the state, 379. without taking the sacramental test, 380. The eminence of his character, 385.

Acts of Parliament.—Of Toleration, 23. To prevent Occasional Conformity, 70. To prevent the growth of schism, 101.

Addresses from Dissenters to the throne.—To King William, 18, 19. To Queen Mary, 21. To Queen Anne, 39, 42. Memorial presented to her against the Schism Bill, 81—101. To George I. 114, 142, 172, 184. To George II. 190. To his Queen, 192. To the King, 216, 235, 237, 240, 253, 256.

Allen Richard, pastor of the church in Paul's-alley, 28.

Anecdotes.—Of Mr. Samuel Burch, 30. Dr. Grosvenor, 227, *note*. Dr. Gill, 76, 158, 203, 425, 437, 443, 444, 450. A high Calvinistic clerk, 439, *note*. Dr. Samuel Chandler, 174. Dr. Doddridge, 194. Pope, 217. Bishop Warburton, ib. Dr. Watts, and Dr. Gibbons, 222. Dr. James Foster, 402. Sir Humphrey Edwin, 377, 408. Dr. Andrew Gifford, 588, 589.

Anne, Queen. Her constitutional professions, 38. Addressed by Dissenting ministers, 39. gives no reply, ib. Presents Mr Joseph Stennett a gratuity, 41. Success of her arms, 40—46. Change of her councils, 64. Friendship for Dr. Sacheveral, 68. Signs the Bill against Schism, 101. Her sudden death, 102. Her character, 106.

Association, Loyal, form of in 1745, 239.

———— Western, 34, 37, 47, 106, 108, 168, 170, 195.

———— London, 31, 48, 58, 275.

———— Country, from the year 1678 to 1683, 333.

Atterbury, Bishop, degraded, 171.

Baptists, Particular. Address King William on his escape from assassination, 24. Publish sermons at his death, 28. Political sentiments of, ib. General Assemblies, remarks on them, 31—33. Western Association letter, 54—37. Appoint a fast, 37. Publish sermons on battle of Blenheim, 40, 41. Admitted to the General Body, 42. Mr. Stennett's sermons on occasion of battle of Ramilies, &c. 44, 55. Deaths of their principal ministers in London, 46. Western Association write to London churches, 47. Assembly of thirteen churches, 48. rules, &c. 51. remarks upon them, 52—58. Assembly of ten churches, 58. resolutions and remarks, 60—62. Their sentiments upon the close of Queen Anne's reign, 64—67. Their political firmness, 69. Not affected by the Occasional Conformity Bill, 70. Distressed by the Schism Bill, 101. Sentiments expressed at the death of the Queen, 102—106. Their opinion of the Queen's character, 106. Western Association letters, 107—109. Address King George I. 115. Form the Horselydown School, 116. Loyal conduct in the year 1715, 120. Address the King, 191. Correspond with Baptists in America, 126—133. Assist French refugee ministers, 133. Baptisteries in Paul's-alley, and Fair-street, 136, 137. Dispute with the Quakers, 138—141. Address the King, 142. Establish the London Fund, 150. confined to Calvinists, 154. refuse to receive the church in Paul's alley, 155. Letter to the churches, 156. Their concern in the Salters'-hall conference, 160—167. Conduct of Western Association in reference to this subject, 167—170. Address the King after the degra-

dation of Bishop Atterbury, 172. Their interest in the Regium Donum, 173—178. Ministers form themselves into a Society, 178. Business of the Society, 179—183. Address the King, 184. State of churches at the end of this reign, 188. Address George II. on his accession, 190. Address the Queen, 192. Unite in the Society of Approved Ministers, &c. 196. and in the Widow's Fund, 199. Lime-street Lectures, 202. and Society of Deputies, 204. and Salters'-hall, 210. Address the King, 216. Oppose Dr. James Foster, 218. Dr. Watts's plan for a comprehension with them, 222. Oppose occasional conformity, 228—233. Address the King, 235, 237. Conduct in 1745, 239. Address the King, 240. Sentiments on the Rebellion, 241—252. Address the King, 253. ib. 256. Non-invitation scheme introduced, 259. Modern Question, 270—275. Monthly meetings, 275. Churches in London, in 1753, 278. Their interest in the Sheriff's cause, 283. Allen Evans, Esq. 284. Unite in the Society for promoting Religious Knowledge, 288. Their opinion of King Geoge II. 292.

Baptists, General, Fund, 183. General Association, 277.

——— of the Six Principles, 406, *note*.

Baptism, immersion by, an instance of its having been deferred because of a severe frost, 332.

Baptism, infant; no foundation in the Scriptures, 215. A human tradition, ib. *note*.

Barrington, Lord, a Presbyterian, 241.

Barrow, Humphrey, pastor of the church in Curriers'-hall, 366.

——— John, pastor of General Baptist church at Pinners'-hall, 408.

Baskerville. Member of the church in Unicorn-yard, 228, 428. Receives the Lord's Supper as a qualification for a civil office, ib. His conduct condemned by the churches, 229—232.

——— Pastor of church at Limehouse, 532.

Belcher, John, pastor of the Sabbatarian church at Pinners'-hall, 406.

Bill of Indemnity passed, 253.

Blackstone, Judge, his remarks upon the Presbyterians, 408.

Booth, Abraham, pastor of the church in Prescot-street, his address at the grave of Edward Wallin, 482.

Braithwaite, George, M. A. pastor of church in Devonshire-square, 355. Mr. Samuel Wilson preached his funeral sermon, 359.

Brine, John, pastor of the church in Cripplegate, 366. Writes against Dr. James Foster, 218. His character of Mr. Clendon Dawkes, 505, Extract from his funeral sermon by Dr. Gill, 371. His epitaph, 372.

Brooks, Benjamin, author of the "Lives of the Puritans." His mistake respecting the Independents having first propagated the principles of religious liberty, *preface* viii. *note*.

Bulkley Charles, pastor of General Baptist church at Pinners'-hall, succeeds Dr. James Foster in the Wednesday-evening Lecture, 401.

Bunhill-fields' burying ground, description of, 303, *note*.

Burford Samuel, pastor of church in Prescot-street, 556—561.

Child, John; his awful apostasy and end, 214, *note*.

Church in Ayle's-street and Angel-alley, 533—541.

——— Broad-street, Old Gravel-lane, Wapping, 293—311.

——— Carter-lane, 430—461.

——— Colliers'-rents, 495—497.

——— Curriers'-hall, Cripplegate, 360—373.

——— Devonshire-square, 311—330.

——— Eagle-street, 591.

——— Goat-street, Horselydown, 409—416.

——— Goodman's yard, 524—525.

——— Great Eastcheap, 511—523.

——— Joiners'-hall, 498—508.

——— Limehouse, 525—533.

——— Little Alie-street, 561—563.

Church in Little Wild-street, 564—591.
——— Lorimers'-hall, 340—348.
——— Maze-pond, 461—490.
——— Petty France, 330—340.
——— Pinners'-hall, 379—405.
———, Sabbatarian, 405—407.
——— Prescot-street, 542—561.
——— Shadwell, 542.
——— Snow's-fields, 492—495.
——— Tallow-chandlers'-hall, 508—511.
——— Turners'-hall, 348—355.
——— Unicorn yard, 416—430.
——— United churches of Devonshire-square and Turners'-hall, 353—360.
——— White-street, 490—492.
Churches, London, associated, 48, 59. list of them in London in 1753, 278. Number of Baptists in England, 279.
Collins, William, pastor of the church in Petty France. His sentiments upon preaching to the unconverted, 260. Eminent scholar, &c. 332. One of the authors of the Baptist confession of faith, ibid. Approved the dispensing power of James II. 335, *note*. Opposed to public singing, 337. Death and character, 339.
Communion, strict; arguments for it, 315, 316. Mixed church at Pinners'-hall, 378.
Confession of Faith of the Particular Baptists, *preface* x.
Controversy, Salters'-hall; its history, 160—163. Reasons assigned by Subscribers and Non-subscribers, 163, 165. Subscribers commended, 169, 170.
Cook Henry, pastor of Sabbatarian church at Pinners'-hall, 406.
Co-pastors.—Dr. Gill's objection to have one, 451. the futility of his reasoning, ib. *note*.
Coxe, Dr. Nehemiah, pastor of the church in Petty France, 332. Acknowledges a dispensing power in James II. 334. Dies poor, ib.
Crisp, Dr. John. Account of the controversy occasioned by reprinting his works, 53, 54, *note*. His sentiments condemned by the Assembly of Baptist churches, 54. His erroneous sentiments 55, *note*. their dangerous tendency, 55, 56. His works republished by Dr. John Gill, 449.
Crossley, David; his call to the ministry, 361. Settles in London, ib. Removes to Tottlebank, 362. His affecting fall, 363. Correspondence with the Rev. George Whitefield, ib.
Crosby, Thomas; a deacon of the church in Goat-street, 409. Removes to Unicorn-yard, 418. Publishes the History of English Baptists, 260.

Davenport, Mr. John; a deacon of Dr. Gill's church, 459. His character, ib. One of the managers of the Baptist Fund, 460.
——— Peter, assistant to Mr. John Noble, 511.
Davy, Joseph, of Leicester, answers Mr. Stokes, 149.
De Veil, Dr. his opinion of Dr. Nehemiah Coxe, 332.
Deacons; importance of the office, 351, *note*.
Delaune, Thomas. Answers John Child's book, 214. His description of hyper Calvinism, 279. Dies in Newgate, 405.
Deputies, Society of, 204. Attempt to procure repeal of Test and Corporation Acts, 206—208. Support Allen Evans, Esq. against the city of London, 283.
Dew, Samuel, pastor of the church in Great Eastcheap, 517.
Dewhirst, Thomas, pastor of the church in Turners'-hall, 350. One of the subscribing ministers, 353.
Diplomas. One sent to Mr. John Gill, unsolicited, from Aberdeen, 431. Remarks upon it, 435, *note*. Latin copy, 436. English translation, 437.
Discipline, scriptural; instances, 337.
——— unscriptual, 327.
Donum Regium, now called the Parliamentary Grant, 173. Mistakes about it corrected, 176.
Dyer, George; his strictures upon Regium Donum, 176.
Evans, Caleb, Dr. invited to Unicorn-yard, 429.
——— Allen; appointed sheriff, 284

—287. but effectually resists it, 589. Deacon of church in Little Wild-street, and Barbican, ib.

Fall, James, pastor at Watford, 563.
—— James, Jun. pastor of church in Little Alie-street, 561—563.
Flower Thomas, pastor of church at Bourton, 426.
Flower, Thomas, jun. pastor of church in Unicorn-yard, 426—428.
Foster James, Dr. becomes a Baptist, 399. Co-pastor of the church in Paul's-alley, 309. Preacher at the Old Jury, 216, 400. Receives a diploma, 402. His monument and epitaph, 403. Works, 404.
Fox, Charles James, Hon. his statement of the conduct of Dissenters in 1745. 253.
Fund, Baptist, London. Its origin, 150. Its regulations, 151. Churches that first composed it, 152. Confined to Calvinists, 154. wisdom of that measure, 155. Circular Letter sent by the managers to the churches, applying for assistance, 156, 157. Dr. Gill one of the first ministers relieved, 158. Encourages literature for ministers, 159. Expends money in purchase of books, 160.
—— Baptist, General, 183.

George I.; his happy accession, 110. His friendship to Dissenters, 115, 116. ib. 123. ib. 145. Unable to procure the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, 146. but succeeds in repealing the Occasional and Schism Bills, 147, 148. Greatly belored by Dissenters, 171. His friendship in presenting them the Regium Donum, 173. His death, 187. His character, 188.
——— II.; his accession, 189. His friendship to Dissenters, 192. Protects Dr. Doddridge, 194. Called by Dr. Joseph Stennett "the greatest and best Prince in the world," 250. Acknowledges the loyalty of Dissenters, 255. ib. 258. His death and character, 291, 292.
Gifford Andrew, Dr. pastor of church in Eagle steet, 573. Sub-librarian at British Museum, 588.
Gill John, Dr. pastor of church in Carter-lane, 430.
—— Mrs.; her biography, 455.
—— Miss Eleanor; Dr. Gill preaches her funeral sermon, 458; his conversation with her, to prove baptism was not essential to salvation, ib.
Ginn, Elizabeth, Mrs. builds a meeting-house in Snow's-fields, 492.
Goat-street meeting, Horsely down, description of, 409.
Grosvenor, Dr. Benjamin, baptized by Mr. Keach, 226. Becomes a Presbyterian, ib.

Harrington, Joseph, minister of church in White-street, 490.
Harrison, Amos, pastor of church at Croyden, 563.
———— Leonard, pastor of church at Limehouse, 500.
———— Thomas, minister of Petty France, 407. lecturer at Pinners'-hall, 408.
———— Thomas, pastor of church in Little Wild-street, 568. conforms to church of England, 571.
Heath, Mr. Job, a deacon of the church in Maze-pond; his excellent character, and happy death, 485.
——— Elizabeth, daughter of the above, dies young, greatly lamented, 487.
Henley, orator, 572.
Hodges, Sir Nathaniel; presents an address to George I. 121. is knighted, 343. monument in Stepney churchyard, 344.
Hollis, Thomas, member of the church in Pinners'-hall upwards of sixty years, 287. Dr. Hunt preaches his funeral sermon; his benevolent character, 389.
—— Hannah; Dr. Hunt preaches her funeral sermon, 399.
—— John, member of Pinners'-hall, 398. unites with his brother in fitting up the baptistery in Paul's-alley, 308. Manager of Baptist Fund, 154. a liberal benefactor to it, 208, 399.
—— Thomas, jun.; his liberal donation to the poor of Baptist churches, 135. Manager of the Baptist Fund, 154. Member of Pinners'-hall, 389. Assists Harvard college in America, 390. The la-

mentations occasioned by his death, 392. 397.
—— Samuel, son of Mr. John Hollis, dies in his youth, 399.

Jackson, Alvery, writes on the modern question, 271.
Jefferies, Dr. Joseph, General Baptist, Pinners'-hall, 408.
Johnson, John, Liverpool, writes on the modern question, 272.
Ireland; plan to provide a learned ministry for it, 384.

Keach, Benjamin, pastor of the church in Goat-street, 409. His Key to the Metaphors, &c. spoken well of by Messrs. Bogue and Bennett, 411.
—— Elias, preaches morning lectures at Pinner's-hall, 408. Pastor at Curriers'-hall, 533, 540.
Key, Mark, pastor of the church in Devonshire-square, 322. One of the subscribing ministers at Salters'-hall, 325.
Kiffin, William, pastor of the church in Devonshire-square, 312. Probably in parliament, 318. A rich merchant, 319. His family, 321.
Killingworth, Grantham. Publishes an Appendix to Salters'-hall sermons against popery, 210. Proves that all the arguments against popery are of equal force against infant baptism, 211, 212.
Kinch Dr., 344.
Knollis, Hansard, pastor of the church at Broken Wharf, 360. His sentiments on the fifth monarchy, ib. *note*. His manner of addressing the unconverted, 364, 365, *note*.

Larwell, James, pastor of church at Limehouse, 532.
Lectures. Lime street, 202. Salters'-hall, 210.
Letter of London ministers and messengers respecting sacramental test, 229—232.
Lidgard, John, Rev. a Roman Catholic writer; his remarks upon infant baptism as unscriptural, 214. his reasoning, 215, *note*.
Literature for ministers encouraged, 57, 159.
Ludlow, Mr. Edward, member of Dr. Gill's church; a pious man, 459.
Lyme, church at, separates a member for taking the sacramental test, 234, *note*.

Mansfield, Lord; his opinion of the conduct of the corporation of London respecting the office of sheriff, 285, 286.
Martin, John, publishes a letter concerning the Regium Donum, 176.
Meeting house, Little Wild-street, used for military exercise in 1745, 252, *note*.
Ministers, Baptist; lists of subscribers and non-subscribers at Salters'-hall controversy, 162, 163.
———— western; list of those who signed a letter respecting the Arian controversy, 170.
———— London; list of those who formed the society at Coffee-house, 179.
Modern question, 260. origin of the debate, 270, *note*.
Monthly meetings, London, 273. copy of a list, 274.

Nichols, John, pastor of church in Ayle's-street, 541.
Noble, John, pastor of the church at Tallow-chandlers'-hall, 502. Mr. Edward Wallin preaches his funeral sermon, 513.
Norcott, John, pastor of church in Old Gravel-lane, 296. Extracts from his funeral sermon, 297. Epitaphs, 298. Publishes upon baptism, 299.

Occasional Conformity Bill; its regulations, 70. Baptists not affected by it, ib. passed, 74.
Ordination among the Baptists, 149.

Page, Sir Gregory, } Members of
—— Dame Mary, } church of Joiner's Hall, 500.
Palmer, Anthony, M.A. pastor of church at Pinners'-hall, 374. extract from a volume of his works, 375.
Parker, Richard, minister in White-street, 490.
Paul's-alley, church of, corrupted by Dr. John Gale, 155. refused admittance to Baptist Fund, ib.
Peterborough, Earl of; Mr. Piggott

dedicates two sermons to him, 26, 27.
Piggott, John, pastor of church in Wild-street, 565, 567. publishes a sermon on defeat of plot against King William, 25. another on the death of that monarch, 28. his sentiments concerning Queen Anne at her accession, 40. sermon on victory at Blenheim, ib. sermon at association of churches, 49. his sermon for Mordecai Abbott, Esq. 381.
Prayer, remarkable answer to, *preface*, vi. 102, 235.
Preaching, manner of, Benjamin Keach, 260. John Bunyan, 261. John Piggott, 262. John Skepp, 263. John Brine, 269. John Gill, 274. Hansard Knolleys, 364, 365, *note*. Andrew Gifford, 608.
——— illustration of the moderate and hyper Calvinists, 267—270, *note*.
Presbyterians; some of their ministers distinguished by the friendship of William III. Controversy with the Independents on Dr. Crisp's errors, 53, *note*. Their difficulties on account of the Occasional Bill, 71. Unite in the General Body, 196. in the Widow's Fund, 199. and Society for Religious Knowledge, 287.

Rebellion in 1745. Dr. Gill's opinion of it, 242.
Rees, David, pastor of the church at Limehouse, 526. his works, 529.
Rhudd, Dr. Sayer, pastor of the church in Turners'-hall, 353. at Devonshire-square, 355; avows the Arian scheme, 181; expelled from the Society of Ministers, 182; preaches in Snow's-fields, 492; becomes an episcopalian, 493; dies at Deal, ib.
——— John, pastor of the church in Old Gravel-lane, 307.
Richardson, Thomas, pastor of the Joiners'-hall church 500. his funeral sermon for Dame Dowager Page, ib.
Riches, danger of them to ministers, 333, 334.
Rider, William, predecessor to Benjamin Keach, 409.
Ridgeway, Edward, pastor of church in Ayle's-street, 541.
Ring, Samuel, a minister of the church in Maze-pond, 469.
Rippon, John, succeeds Dr. Gill, 416.
Robinson, Robert, pastor of the church at Cambridge; his opinion of the principles of Mr. Hussey, 295. His proposal to make Bristol academy a College, 609, *note*.
Russell, ——, pastor of the church in White-street, 490.
Ryland, John; his funeral sermon for Dr. Gifford, 603.

Sacheverel, Dr.; mobs on his account, 67, 68. Congregation in Paul's-alley make a collection towards damages to meeting-houses, ib.
Sacramental test; Baptists refuse to take it, 380. Sentiments of Mr. Joseph Stennett concerning it, 380, 381.
Schism Bill passed, 101. its enactments repealed, 148.
Scoffield, Henry, called to ministry by church in Goat-street, 452.
Sharpe, John, minister of the church at Frome; his conduct in the Salters'-hall conference, 165.
Sheriff's cause; its history, 283—287.
Skepp, John, pastor of the church at Cripplegate, 364. His work on Divine Energy, &c. published after his death, ib. An excellent Hebrew scholar, 366. Urges Dr. Gill to apply himself to the Hebrew language, ib.
Society, united, of London ministers, 196.
——— of deputies, 198, 204.
——— Widow's Fund, 200.
——— Religious Knowledge, 288.
——— Gloucester Coffee house, 179.
Sprinkling, infant, a great corruption, 210. no foundation in Scripture, 211. silence of Scripture condemns it, 213. a part and pillar of popery, 214. tradition its only support, ib.
Spurrier, Aaron, minister at Maze-pond, 469.
——— Aaron, jun. pastor of church at Limehouse, 529.
Stephens, Daniel, minister of church in White-street, 497.
Stennett, Joseph, pastor of Sabbata-

rian church at Pinners'-hall; writes and presents an address to King William III. 24. publishes a sermon on account of the victory at Blenheim, 40. Rewarded by Queen Anne, 41. Writes the address to the Queen, 42. Sermon on victory of Ramillies, 44. and on the union of Scotland and England, ib. Thanksgiving sermon, 45. Preaches and presides at Association, 59. Replies to Mr. Russen's work, 62. Is requested to write a history of baptism, 63. Writes a letter of advice to the city representatives, 65. His noble patriotic conduct, 69.

Stennett, Dr. Joseph. His sentiments of the Arian heresy, 170. and of the non-subscribers at Salters'-hall, 174. Sermon on academical instruction, 221. Publishes a sermon on account of victory at Dettingen, 234. Presents an address to George II. 240. Sermon on retreat of the rebels, 242. His eloquent and patriotic appeals, 243—252. Sermon on the Rebellion, 255. and at close of the war, 259. Assists Mr. Alvery Jackson, 271. One of the founders of the Society for promoting Religious Knowledge, 288.

——— Dr. Samuel; sermon on the death of George II. 291. Succeeds his father at Little Wild-street, 590.

Stinton, Benjamin; succeeds Mr. Keach in the church at Goat-street, 412. Establishes the Maze-pond school, ib. Prepares materials for history of the Baptists, 415. His sudden death, ib.

Stokes, Joseph, writes against Baptists, 116, 149.

Taylor, John, deacon of church in Little Wild-street; sends books to America, 127.

——— Dr. Abraham; opposes Dr. Gill, 203.

Thompson, Josiah, minister at Kingston, 429.

——— Josiah, Jun. pastor of Unicorn yard, 429. resigns his charge, ib. dies at Clapham, ib. His manuscript collections, 430. One of the founders of the Society of Religious Knowledge, 288.

Tomkins, Mr. Edward, deacon of the church in Maze-pond, 477, 489.

——— Benjamin, deacon of Maze-pond, 489. his reverence for the Lord's day, ib. his happy death, 490.

Toplapy, Augustus, A. B.; his friendship for Dr. Gill, 441. his description of Dr. Gill's character, 445.

Townsend, Edmund, pastor of Sabbatarian church, Pinners'-hall, 407.

——— John, minister in London, 407, 469.

——— Meredith, called to ministry by church in Prescot-street; becomes a Pædobaptist minister, 307.

Travers, Mr. John, deacon of church at Joiners'-hall, 524.

Wake, Archbishop; his constitutional sentiments, 28. votes and protests against Schism Bill, and afterwards against its repeal, 147. Proposes a union of English and French churches, ib.

Wallin, Edward, pastor of the church in Maze-pond, 462. eminence of his character, 465. his happy death, 466. his sentiments, 467. his epitaph, 468.

——— Benjamin, succeeds his father at Maze-pond, 472. his excellent character, 479—482. his epitaph, and works, 483.

Warburton, ——, minister at the New Way in the Maze, 461.

Warren, ——, succeeded him, ib.

Watson, Thomas, Esq. deacon of the church at Cripplegate, 521, *note*.

Watts, Dr. Isaac; proposes to Dr. Gibbons a plan of comprehension between Independents and Baptists, 222. futility of the measure, 223, 227. His sentiments on Christian baptism, 224, 225, *note*.

Wavell, Richard, M. A. pastor of the church in Pinners'-hall, 377.

Way, Lewis, Esq. 569.

Weatherly, John, general Baptist minister at Pinners'-hall, 408.

Wesley, John; takes a Baptist chapel, 290. is written against by Dr. Gill, ib. the usefulness of his ministry, 291.

West, Edward, pastor of church in Maze-pond, 470.

Whiston, Matthew, Esq.; baptized by Dr. James Foster, 402.
Whitefield, George; his remarkable character, successful labours, results of his ministry as to the Baptist churches, 280. 281. Preached his first sermon, 280, *note*. Time of his death, ib.
William III. Prince of Orange; lands at Torbay, 17. accepts the Act of Settlement, and is crowned King, 19. promises protestant Dissenters his protection, &c. 21. procures with difficulty the Act of Toleration, 23. escapes from assassination, 24. his death, 27. his character, 29. Baptists propose a monument for him, 30. secured the crown to the House of Hanover, 31.
Williams, Dr. Edward; his sermon on Occasional Conformity Bill, 71—74.
Wilson, Ebenezer; educated under Mr. Timothy Jollie, 347. settles in London; his death and character, 348.
——— Samuel, presents an address to King George II. 216. Opposes the sentiments of Dr. James Foster, 218. Assistant to Mr. John Noble, 307. Pastor of church in Prescot-street, 542.
——— Walter, Esq.; his description of the character of Dr. Gill, 448; his mistake respecting Dr. Grosvenor, 226; his merits as an historian, *preface*, xi.
Wise, Lawrence, minister of the church in Goodman's yard, 524.
Wyles, Nathaniel, pastor of church at Shadwell, 542.

ERRATA.

For victims,	*read* nations,	page	110,	line	11.
— alloweth,	— abhorreth,	—	232,	—	15.
— praise,	— pain,	—	269,	—	16, *note*.
— Alvey,	— Alvery,	—	271,	—	21.
— Furnaux,	— Furneaux,	—	285,	—	25.

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*** THE PROSPECTUS OF THE WORK may be had of every Bookseller in the United Kingdom.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY A. APPLEGATH, STAMFORD STREET.